



Graham del.

MR. BENSON as TIMURKAN
Traitor 'is false!—



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(47)

THE
ORPHAN OF CHINA.

A
TRAGEDY.

By **ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.**

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

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1797.



TO THE RIGHT HON.
JOHN EARL OF BUTE,
GROOM OF THE STOLE TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF WALES.

MY LORD,

THE generous concern you were pleased to express for the anxieties of a young Author, then wholly unknown to your Lordship, and trembling for his first attempt towards "the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all poems," as Milton calls a Tragedy, was the distinguishing mark of a mind truly great, and endued with those fine feelings which are the ornaments of even greatness itself. To this your innate partiality for every endeavour in the polite arts I must ascribe it, that the following scenes met with an early approbation from your Lordship; an approbation that was at once the Author's pride, and his strongest assurance of success.

The Public have indeed very far outgone my most sanguine hopes, in their reception of this piece: but now, my Lord, the Orphan has another severe trial to go through; he must adventure into the world, unassisted by the advantages of representation: he must enter your Lordship's closet, and there stand the examination of the most accurate criticism. In meti descendat judicis aures. This cannot but be an alarming circumstance to a writer fully conscious of his own inability; who has not been able en-

tirely to please even his own taste; who despairs of satisfying others of a more exalted relish in the arts, and therefore craves at your Lordship's hands that protection to his industry, which, he is aware, cannot be granted to his merit.

*I have the honour to remain, with the truest respect,
and most grateful acknowledgment,*

My Lord, your Lordship's most obliged,

And most devoted humble servant,

ARTHUR MURPHY.

Lincoln's Inn, April 30, 1759.

TO
M. DE VOLTAIRE.

SIR,

A LETTER to you from an English author will carry with it the appearance of corresponding with the enemy; not only as the two nations are at present involved in a difficult and important war, but also because in many of your late writings you seem determined to live in a state of hostility with the British Nation. Whenever we come in your way, 'we are ferocious, 'we are islanders, we are the people whom your country has taught, we fall behind other nations in point of taste and elegance of composition; the same cause that has withheld from us a genius for painting and music, has also deprived us of the true spirit of Tragedy; and, in short, barbarism still prevails among us.'

But, notwithstanding this vein of prejudice, which has discoloured almost all your *fugitive pieces*, there still breathes throughout your writings such a general spirit of humanity and zeal for the honour of the Republic of Letters, that I am inclined to imagine the author of the English Orphan of China (an obscure islander) may still address you upon terms of amity and literary benevolence.

As I have attempted a tragedy upon a subject that has exercised your excellent talents, and thus have dared to try my strength in the bow of Ulysses, I hold myself in some sort accountable to M. De Voltaire for the departure I have made from his plan, and the substitution of a new fable of my own.

My first propensity to this story was occasioned by the remarks of an admirable critic * of our own upon the Orphan of the House of Chau, preserved to us by the industrious and sensible P. Du Halde, which, as our learned commentator observes, amidst great wildness and irregularity, has still some traces of resemblance to the beautiful models of antiquity. In my reflections upon this piece, I imagined I saw a blemish in the manner of saving the Orphan, by the tame resignation of another infant in his place; especially when the subject afforded so fair an opportunity to delineate the strugglings of a parent on so trying an occasion. It therefore occurred to me, if a fable could be framed, in which the Father and the two Young Men might be interwoven with probability and perspicuity, and not embarrassed with all the perplexities of a riddle, as, you know, is the case of the Heraclius of Corneille, that then many situations might arise, in which some of the nearest affections of the heart might be awakened: but even then I was too conscious that

* Mr. Hurd, in his Commentary upon Horace.

this must be executed in its full force by a genius very different from myself.

In this state of mind, Sir, I heard with pleasure that M. de Voltaire had produced at Paris his *L'Orphelin de la Chine*: I ardently longed for a perusal of the piece, expecting that such a writer would certainly seize all the striking incidents which might naturally grow out of so pregnant a story, and that he would leave no source of passion unopened. I was in some sort, but not wholly disappointed: I saw M. De Voltaire rushing into the midst of things at once; opening his subject in an alarming manner; and, after the narrative relating to Gengiskan is over, working up his first act like a poet indeed.

*Meum qui pectus inaniter angit
Ut Magus.*

In the beginning of the second act, he again touches our affections with a master-hand; but, like a rower who has put forth all his strength, and suddenly slackens his exertion, I saw, or imagined I saw him give way all at once; the great tumult of the passions is over; the interest wears away; Gengiskan talks politics; the tenderness of a mother, flying with all the strong impulses of nature to the relief of her child, is thrown into cold unimpassioned narrative; the *role pour l'amoureux* must have its place, and the rough conqueror of a whole people must instantly become

Le Chevalier Gengiskan, as errant a lover as ever sighed in the Thuilleries at Paris. Your own words, Sir, strongly expressive of that manly and sensible taste, which distinguishes you throughout Europe, occurred to me on this occasion: ‘Quelle place pour la galanterie que le parricide & l’inceste, qui désolent une famille, & la contagion qui ravage un pays? Et quel exemple plus frappant du ridicule de notre theatre, & du pouvoir de l’habitude, que *Corneille* d’un côté, qui fait dire à *Thésée*.——

‘Quelque ravage affreux qu’étaie ici la Peste;

‘L’absence aux vrais amans est encore plus funeste.

‘Et moi, qui, soixante ans apres lui, viens faire parler une vielle *Jocaste* d’un viel amour: & tout cela pour complaire au goût le plus fade & le plus faux qui ait jamais corrompu la littérature.’ Indeed, Sir, Gengiskan, in the very moment of overwhelming a whole nation, usurping a crown, and massacring the royal family, except one infant, whom he is in quest of, appeared to me exactly like the amorous *Cædipus* in the midst of a destructive plague. ‘*Nunc non erat his locus.*’—How would that noble performance, that *chef d’œuvre* of your country, the *Athalie* of *Racine*, have been defaced by the gallantry of an intrigue, if a tyrant had been introduced to make love to the wife of the high-priest? or if *Joad*, entertaining a secret affection for *Athalie*, and being asked what orders he would give relating to the delivery of his country, should answer, “aucune,” none at all.—And yet this

is the language of a northern conqueror, whining for a Mandarin's wife, who has no power of resisting, and having no relation to the royal family, could not, by an intermarriage, strengthen his interest in the crown. But to you, who have told us that Love should reign a very tyrant in tragedy, or not appear there at all, being unfit for the second place; to you, who have said that Nero should not hide himself behind a tapestry, to overhear the conversation of his mistress and his rival; to you, Sir, what need I urge these remarks? To fill up the long career of a tragedy with this episodic love must certainly have been the motive that led you into this error; an error I take the liberty to call it, because I have observed it to be the hackneyed and ineffectual stratagem of many modern writers. Within the compass of my reading, there is hardly a bad man in any play, but he is in love with some very good woman: the scenes that pass between them, I have always remarked, are found dull and unawakening by the audience, even though adorned with all the graces of such composition as yours, of which it is but justice to say, that it bestows embellishments upon every subject.

For me, Sir, who only draw in crayons, who have no resource to those lasting colours of imagination with which you set off every thing; a writer such as I am, Sir, could not presume to support that duplicity of passion which runs through your piece. I could not pre-

tend, by the powers of style, to suborn an audience in favour of those secondary passages, from which their attention naturally revolts. A plainer and more simple method lay before me. I was necessitated to keep the main object as much as possible before the eye; and therefore it was that I took a survey of my subject, in order to catch at every thing that seemed to me to result with order and propriety from it. A scantiness of interesting business seemed to me a primary defect in the construction of the French Orphan of China, and that I imagined had its source in the early date of your play. By beginning almost "*geminio ab ovo*," by making the Orphan and the Mandarin's son children in their cradles, it appeared to me that you had stripped yourself of two characters, which might be produced in an amiable light, so as to engage the affections of their auditors, not only for themselves, but consequentially for those also to whom they should stand in any degree of relation. From this conduct I proposed a further advantage, that of effacing the very obvious resemblance to the Andromache, which now strikes every body in your plan. This last remark I do not urge against accidental and distant coincidences of sentiment, diction, or fable. Many of the Greek plays, we know, had a family-likeness, such as an *Cedipus*, an *Electra*, an *Iphigenia in Tauris*, in *Aulis*, a *Merope*, &c. But what is a beauty in Racine, seems in his great successor to be a blemish. In the former, nothing depends on the life of *Astyanax* but

what was very natural---the happiness of the mother: in the latter, the fate of a kingdom is grafted upon the fortunes of an infant; and I ask your own feelings, (for no body knows the human heart better) whether an audience is likely to take any considerable interest in the destiny of a babe, who, when your Zamti has saved him, cannot produce any change, any revolution in the affairs of China? No, Sir; the conquered remain in the same abject state of vassalage, and the preservation of the infant king becomes therefore almost uninteresting, certainly unimportant: whereas, when the Orphan is grown up to maturity, when he is a moral agent in the piece, when a plan is laid for revenging himself on the destroyers of his family, it then becomes a more pressing motive in the Mandarin's mind; nay, it is almost his duty, in such a case, to sacrifice even his own offspring for the good of his country. In your story, Sir, give me leave to say, I do not see what end can be answered by Zamti's loyalty? His prospect is at least so distant that it becomes almost chimerical. And therefore, as history warrants an expulsion of the Tartars; as it was not upon the first inroad, but in process of time and experience, that they learned to incorporate themselves with the conquered, by adopting their laws and customs, I had recourse to my own preconceived notions. Whether I was partially attached to them, or whether my reasonings upon your fable were just, you, Sir, and the public, will determine.

You will perceive, Sir, in the English Orphan some occasional insertions of sentiment from your elegant performance. To use the expression of the late Mr. Dryden, when he talks of Ben Jonson's imitation of the ancients, you *will often track me in your snow*. For this I shall make no apology, either to the public or to you: none to the public, because they have applauded some strokes for which I am indebted to you; and none certainly to you, because you are well aware I have in this instance followed the example of many admired writers; Boileau, Corneille, and Racine, in France; and in England, Milton, Mr. Addison, and Mr. Pope. It was finely said by you, (I have read the story, and take it upon trust) when it was objected to the celebrated Abbé Metastasio, as a reproach, that he had frequent transfusions of thought from your writings, 'Ah! le cher voleur! il m'a bien embelli.' This talent of embellishing I do not pretend to: to avail myself of my reading, and to improve my own productions, is all I can pretend to; and that, I flatter myself, I have done, not only by transplanting from you, but also from many of the writers of antiquity. If the authorities I have above mentioned were not sufficient, I could add another very bright example, the example of M. De Voltaire, whom I have often tracked, to use the same expression, in the *snow of Shakspeare*. The snow of Shakspeare is but a cold expression; but perhaps it will be more agreeable to you than a word of greater energy, that should convey a

full idea of the astonishing powers of that great man; for we islanders have remarked of late, that M. De Voltaire has a particular satisfaction in descanting on the faults of the most wonderful genius that ever existed since the æra of Homer, and that too, even then, when he is under obligations to him; insomuch that a very ingenious gentleman of my acquaintance tells me, that whenever you treat the English bard as a drunken savage in your *avant propos*, he always deems it a sure prognostic that your play is the better for him.

If the great scenes of Shakspeare, Sir; if his boundless view of all nature---the lawn, the wilderness, the blasted heath, mountains, and craggy rocks, with thunder and lightning on their brows;—if these cannot strike the imagination of M. De Voltaire, how can I expect that the studied regularity of my little shrubbery should afford him any kind of pleasure? To drop the metaphor, if the following tragedy does not appear to you a monstrous Farce, it is all I can reasonably expect. But whatever may be your opinion of it, I must beg that you will not make it the criterion by which you would decide concerning the taste of the English nation, or the present state of literature among us. What you have humbly said of yourself, in order to do honour to your nation, I can assert with truth of the author of the English Orphan, that he is one of the worst poets now in this country. It is true, in-

deed, that the play has been received with uncommon applause; that so elegant a writer as the author of *Creusa* and the *Roman Father* was my critic and my friend; and that a great deal of very particular honour has been done me by many persons of the first distinction. But, give me leave to say, they all know the faults of the piece as well as if it had been discussed by the Academy of *Belles Letters*.—We are a generous nation, Sir; and even the faintest approaches to merit always meet here the warmest encouragement. One thing further I will assure you, in case you should discover any traces of barbarism in the style or fable, That if you had been present at the representation, you would have seen a theatrical splendor conducted with a *bienseance* unknown to the *scene Francoise*; the performers of *Zaphimri* and *Hamet*, by their interesting manner, would have made you regret that you had not enriched your piece with two characters, to which a colourist, like you, would have given the most beautiful touches of the pencil, had the idea struck your fancy; and, though a weak state of health deprived the play of so fine an actress as Mrs. Cibber, you would have beheld in *Mandane* a figure that would be an ornament to any stage in Europe, and you would have acknowledged that her acting promises to equal the elegance of her person: moreover, you would have seen a *Zamti*, whose exquisite powers are capable of adding pathos and harmony even to our great *Shakspeare*, and have already been the chief support of some of your own scenes upon the English stage.

Upon the whole, Sir, I beg you will not imagine that I have written this tragedy in the fond hope of eclipsing so celebrated a writer as M. De Voltaire: I had an humbler motive, *propter amorem quod te imitari aueo*. Could I do that in any distant degree, it would very amply gratify the ambition of,

Sir, your real admirer,

And most humble servant,

The AUTHOR of the

ORPHAN OF CHINA.

London, April, 30, 1759.

PROLOGUE.

BY WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, ESQ. POET-LAUREAT.

SPOKEN BY MR. HOLLAND.

*ENOUGH of Greece and Rome. The exhausted store
Of either nation now can charm no more;
Ew'n adventitious helps in vain we try,
Our triumphs languish in the public eye;
And grave processions, musically slow,
Here pass unheeded—as a Lord Mayor's shew.*

*On eagle wings the poet of to-night
Soars for fresh virtues to the source of light,
To China's eastern realms: and boldly bears
Confucius' morals to Britannia's ears.
Accept th' imported boon; as echoing Greece
Receiv'd from wand'ring chiefs her golden fleece;
Nor only richer by the spoils become,
But praise th' advent'rous youth, who brings them home.*

*One dubious character, we own, he draws,
A patriot zealous in a Monarch's cause!
Nice is the task the varying band to guide,
And teach the blending colours to divide;
Where, rainbow-like, th' encroaching tints invade
Each other's bounds, and mingle light with shade.*

*If then, assiduous to obtain his end,
You find too far the subject's zeal extend;
If undistinguish'd loyalty prevails
Where nature shrinks, and strong affection fails,*

*On China's tenets charge the fond mistake,
And spare his error for his virtue's sake.*

*From nobler motives our allegiance springs,
For Britain knows no Right Divine in Kings.
From Freedom's choice that boasted right arose,
And through each line from Freedom's choice it flows.
Justice, with Mercy join'd, the throne maintains;
And in his People's Hearts our Monarch reigns.*

Dramatis Personæ.

Men.

TIMURKAAN, Emperor of the Tartars,	-	Mr. HAVARD.
OCTAR, a Tartar General,	- - - - -	Mr. BRANSEY.
ZAMTI, a Mandarine,	- - - - -	Mr. GARRICK.
ETAN, educated as his Son,	- - - - -	Mr. MOSSOP.
HAMET, a youthful Captive,	- - - - -	Mr. HOLLAND.
MORAT, a faithful Friend of Zamti,	- -	Mr. BURTON.
MIRVAN, a Chinese in the Tartar's service, secretly a friend of Zamti,	}	Mr. DAVIES.
ORASHING, }	Two Conspirators,	Mr. PACKER.
ZIMVENTI, }		Mr. AUSTIN.

Woman.

MANDANE, Zamti's wife,	- - - - -	Mrs. YATES.
Messenger, Guards, &c.		

Scene, *Pekin, Capital of China.*



THE ORPHAN OF CHINA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter MANDANE and MIRVAN.

Mandane.

No, never; Mirvan, never—still this heart
Must throb with ceaseless woe—All-gracious Heav'n!
Will not this palace, drench'd in gore; the crown
Of China's kings fix'd on the Tartar's brow;
Will not a tract of twenty years in bondage!
Ah! will not these suffice; without a fresh cause
Of bitter anguish in Mandane's breast?—

Mir. Better suppress these unavailing tears,
This fruitless flood of grief.

Man. It will not be——

Ev'n 'midst the horrors of this dismal hour,
When fate has all transferr'd from lost Cathai
To vile barbarian hands;—in such an hour,
This heart, revolting from the public cause,
Bleeds from a private source; bleeds for the woes
That hang o'er Zamti's house.——

Mir. Alas! Mandane,
Amidst the gen'ral wreck, who does not feel
The keen domestic pang?

Man. Yes, all.—We all
Must feel the kindred-touch;—daily the cries
Of widows, orphans, father, son, and brother,
In vain are sent to heav'n;—the wasteful rage
Of these barbarians—these accurs'd invaders—
Burns with increasing fire;—the thunder still
Rolls o'er our heads, threatening with hideous crash
To fall at once, and bury us in ruin.

Mir. And quickly fall it must!—the hand of heav'n
Weighs this great empire down.

Man. Nay, tax not Heav'n!
Almighty Justice never bares it's arm
'Gainst innocence and truth. 'Tis Timurkan,
That fell barbarian—that insatiate waster——
May curses blast the Tartar!—he—'tis he
Has bore down all, and still his slaught'ring sword
In yonder field of death, where Corea's troops
Made their last stand for Liberty and China,
Crimsons the land with blood. This battle lost,
Oh! then farewell to all!—But, Mirvan, say,
How came the tidings?

Mir. From yon lofty tow'r,
As my eyes, straining tow'rd the distant plain,
Sent forth an anxious look, through clouds of dust
The savage bands appear'd; the western sun
Gleam'd on their burnish'd helms; and soon a shout
From the glad multitude proclaim'd th' approach

Of Timurkan:—elated with new conquest,
The tyrant comes, and where his wrath will stop
Heav'n only knows! —————

Man. Oh! there—there lies the thought
At which imagination starts, appall'd
With horror at the scene her busy workings
Have colour'd to my sight:—there lies the thought
That wakens all a mother's fears—alas!
I tremble for my son!

Mir. Your son!—kind Heav'n!
Have you not check'd his ardour?—with your tears,
Your soft authority, restrain'd the hero
From the alarms of war? —————

Man. Alas, good Mirvan,
Thou little know'st his danger!—but that truth
Must never pass these lips.

Mir. I hope Mandane
Doubts not my honest zeal—full well you know
I bear this tyrant deep and mortal hate;
That under him I list, and wear this garb
In hopes that some occasion may arrive,
When I may strike an unexpected blow,
And do my country right.

Man. Thy loyalty,
Thy truth and honour have been ever spotless.
Besides thy wrongs, thy countless wrongs, the wounds
He gave your injur'd family and name——

Mir. Alas! those wounds must still lie bleeding here,
Untented by the hand of time—Not all
His lenient arts, his favours heap'd upon me,

Shall cool the burning anguish of my soul.
What he, that slew my father!—dragg'd my sister,
Blooming in years, to his detested bed!—
Yes, tyrant, yes:—thy unextinguish'd foe
Dwells in this bosom. Surely then to me
Mandane may reveal her griefs—her wrongs
Will add new fuel to my hidden fires,
And make them burn more fiercely.——

Man. Urge no more——

My woes must rest conceal'd—yet should the tyrant
Learn from the captives of yon vanquish'd host,
That China's Orphan breathes the vital air,
And to himself unknown, within his breast
Unconscious bears the gen'rous glowing flame
Of all the virtues of his royal line;
Oh! should they know that the dear youth survives,
That for his righteous cause this war began,
Their fury then would kindle to a blaze,
Might wrap the world in flames, and in the ruin
My blameless son must perish!

Mir. Seek not thus

To multiply the ills that hover round you;
Nor from the stores of busy fancy add
New shafts to fortune's quiver. Zamti's care
Hath still deceiv'd suspicion's wakeful eye;
And o'er the Mandarin his manners pure,
And sacred function, have diffus'd an air
Of venerable awe, which e'en can teach
These northern foes to soften into men.

Man. Yes, Mirvan, yes—Religion wears a mien

In Zamti's person so severely mild,
That the fierce Scythian rests upon his spear,
And wonders what he feels! Such is the charm
Of heart-felt virtue; such is nature's force
That speaks abroad, and in rude northern hearts
Can stamp the image of an awful God.
From that source springs some hope:—Wretch that
I am!

Hope idly flutters on my trembling tongue,
While Melancholy, brooding o'er her wrongs,
Lays waste the mind with horror and despair.
—What noise is that?—

Mir. Compose this storm of grief;
In ev'ry sound your fancy hears the Tartar—
Your husband this way bends—

Man. Celestial Pow'rs!
What lab'ring sighs heave in his breast?—what terror
Rolls in the patriot's eye?—haste, Mirvan, hence;
Again look out; gather the flying news,
And let me know each circumstance of ruin.

[Exit Mirvan.]

Enter ZAMTI.

Man. Zamti!

Zamti. Mandane!

Man. Ah! what hast thou seen?
What hast thou heard?—Tell me---has fate decreed
The doom of China?

Zamti. China is no more!—
The eastern world is lost—this mighty empire
Falls with the universe beneath the stroke

Of savage force---falls from it's tow'ring hopes;
For ever, ever fall'n!

Man. Yet, why, ye Pow'rs!

Why should a tyrant, train'd to lust and murder,
A lawless ravager from savage wilds,
Where cheerful day ne'er dawns, but low'ring heav'n
For ever rolls a turbulence of clouds;
Why should a monster thus usurp the world,
And trample fair simplicity from ill
Beneath his ruffian feet?-----

Zamti. Far hence, Mandane,

Those happy days, alas! are fled, when peace
Here nurs'd her blooming olives, and shed round
Her fost'ring influence.—In vain the plan
Of sacred laws, by hoary elders taught,
Laws founded on the base of public weal,
Gave lessons to the world. In vain Confucius
Unlock'd his radiant stores of moral truth;
In vain bright science, and each tender muse,
Beam'd ev'ry elegance on polish'd life-----
Barbarian pow'r prevails. Whate'er our sages taught,
Or genius could inspire, must fade away,
And each fair virtue wither at the blast
Of northern domination.

Man. Fatal day!

More fatal e'en than that, which first beheld
This race accurs'd within these palace walls,
Since hope, that balm of wretched minds, is now
Irrevocably lost.-----

Zamti. Name not the day,

Which saw this city sack'd—fresh stream my eyes,
Fresh bleeds my heart, whene'er the sad idea
Comes o'er my tortur'd mind. Why, cruel Pow'rs!
Why in that moment could not Zamti fall?

Man. Thy sanctity, the symbol of thy God,
Made ev'n the conqueror suspend his blow,
And murmur soft humanity. High Heav'n
Protected thee for its own great designs;
To save the royal child, the new-born babe,
From the dire slaughter of his ancient line.

Zamti. Yes, my Mandane, in that hour of carnage,
For purposes yet in the womb of time,
I was reserv'd. I was ordain'd to save
The infant boy; the dear, the precious charge,
The last of all my kings:—full twenty years
I've hid him from the world, and from himself,
And now I swear——Kneel we together here;
While in this dreadful pause our souls renew
Their solemn purpose.——

[Both kneel.

Thou all-gracious Being,
Whose tutelary care hath watch'd the fate
Of China's Orphan, who hast taught his steps
The paths of safety, still envelope him
In sev'nfold night, till your own hour is come;
Till your slow justice see the dread occasion
To rouse his soul, and bid him walk abroad
Vicegerent of your pow'r;—and if thy servant,
Or this his soft associate, e'er defeat
By any word or deed the great design,
Then straight may all your horrible displeasure

Be launch'd upon us from your red right arm,
And in one ruin dash us both together,
The blasted monuments of wrath.——

Man. That here

Mandane vows ne'er to betray his cause,
Be it enroll'd in the records of Heav'n! [*Both rise.*

Zamti. And now my heart more lightly beats; me—
With strength redoubled I can meet the shock [*thinks*
Of adverse fate.

Man. And lo! the trial comes——

For see where Etan mourns——See where the youth,
Unknowing of the storm that gathers o'er him,
Brings some new tale of woe.——

Enter ETAN.

Etan. My honour'd father,
And you, my helpless mother,---ah! where now,
Illustrious wretched pair, where will ye fly?
Where will your miseries now find a shelter?

Zamti. In virtue---I and this dear faithful woman---
We ask no more.

Man. Ah! quickly, Etan, say
What means that pallid look? What new event
Brings on the work of fate?——

Zamti. Say, does the tyrant
Return unglutted yet with blood?——

Etan. He does!

Ev'n now his triumph moves within the gates
In dread barbaric pomp:---the iron swarms
Of Hyperboreans troop along the streets,

Reeking from slaughter; while, from gazing crowds
Of their dire countrymen, an uproar wild
Of joy ferocious through th' astonish'd air
Howls like a northern tempest :---O'er the rest,
Proud in superior eminence of guilt,
The tyrant rides sublime.---Behind his car
The refuse of his sword, a captive train
Display their honest scars, and gnash their teeth
With rage and desperation.——

Man. Cruel fate!

Etan. With these a youth, distinguish'd from the rest,
Proceeds in sullen march. Heroic fire
Glows in his cheek, and from his ardent eye
Beams amiable horror.

Man. What of this youth?

Zamti. Be not alarm'd, Mandanes—What of him?

Etan. On him all eyes were fix'd with eager gaze,
As if their spirits, struggling to come forth,
Would strain each visual nerve—while thro' the crowd
A busy murmur ran---“If fame say right,
“Beneath that habit lurks a Prince; the last
“Of China's race.”—The rumour spreads abroad
From man to man; and all with loud acclaim
Denounce their vengeance on him.——

Man. Ha! what say'st thou, Etan?
Heav'n's, how each black'ning hour in deeper horror
Comes charg'd with woe!

Zamti. It cannot be. Ye vain,
Ye groundless terrors, hence!——

[*Aside.*

Man. My honour'd lord,

Those eyes upturn'd to Heav'n, alas! in vain,
Declare your inward conflict.——

Zamti. Lov'd Mandane,

I pr'ythee leave me—but a moment leave me.——

Heed not the workings of a sickly fancy,
Wrought on by every popular report.

Thou know'st, with Morat I convey'd the infant
Far as the eastern point of Corea's realm;

There, where no human trace is seen, no sound
Assails the ear, save when the foaming surge

Breaks on the shelving beach, that there the youth
Might mock their busy search. Then check thy fears—

Retire, my love, awhile; I'll come anon—

And fortify thy soul with firm resolve,

Becoming Zamti's wife.——

Mar. Yes, Zamti's wife

Shall never act unworthy of her lord!

Then hence I'll go, and satisfy each doubt

This youthful captive raises in my heart,

Quick panting with its fears. And O ye Pow'rs!

Protect my son, my husband, and my king!

[*Exit Mandane.*]

Zamti. Come hither, Etan—thou perceiv'st the toils
That now incircle me.

Etan. Alas! too well

I see th' impending storm. But surely, Sir,
Should this young captive prove the royal Orphan,
You'll never own th' important truth.

Zamti. Dream not, young man,
To stand secure, yet blooming into life,

While vengeance hovers o'er your father's head.
The stock once fallen, each scyon must decay.

Etan. Then let me perish!—Witness for me, Heav'n,
Could Etan's fall appease the tyrant's wrath,
A willing victim he would yield his life,
And ask no greater boon of Heav'n.

Zamti. This zeal
So fervid in a stranger's cause——

Etan. A stranger!—he!—
My king a stranger!—Sir, you never meant it—
Perhaps you would explore the fiery seeds
Of Etan's temper, ever prompt to blaze
At Honour's sacred name. Perish the man,
Who, when his country calls him to defend
The rights of human kind, or bravely die,
Who then to glory dead can shrink aghast,
And hold a council with his abject fears!

Zamti. These tow'nings of the soul, alas! are vain.
I know the Tartar well—should I attempt
By any virtuous fraud to veil the truth,
His lion-rage again shall stalk abroad,
Again shall quaff the blood of innocence;
And for Zaphimri all the poor remains
Of China's matrons, and her hoary sires,
Her blooming virgins, and her lisping babes,
Shall yield their throats to the fell murd'rer's knife,
And all be lost for ever!

Etan. Then at once
Proclaim him to the world; each honest hand
Will grasp a sword, and, 'midst the circling guards,

Reach the usurper's heart—or should they fail,
Should overwhelming bands obstruct the deed,
They'll greatly dare to die!—better to die
With falling Liberty, than basely lead
An ignominious life. Zaphimri lost,
Ne'er shall fair Order dawn, but through the land
Slav'ry shall clank her chains, and violation,
Rapine, and murder riot at the will
Of lust and lawless pow'r.

Zamti. Thou brave young man,
Indulge my fond embrace—thy lovely ardour
It glads me thus to see!—To ease at once
Thy gen'rous fears,—the prince Zaphimri's safe;
Safe in my guardian care.

Etan. This pris'ner, Sir,
He does not then alarm you?

Zamti. No! from thence
I've nought to fear.

Etan. Oh! Sir, inform your son
Where is the royal heir?

Zamti. Seek not too soon
To know that truth—now I'll disclose the work,
The work of vengeance, which my lab'ring soul
Has long been fashioning. Ev'n at this hour
Stupendous ruin hovers o'er the heads
Of this accursed race.

Etan. Ruin!

Zamti. I'll tell thee——

When Timurkan led forth his savage bands,
Unpeopling this great city, I then seiz'd

The hour, to tamper with a chosen few,
Who have resolv'd, when the barbarians lie
Buried in sleep and wine, and hotly dream
Their havock o'er again—then, then, my son,
In one collected blow to burst upon 'em; [horror
Like their own northern clouds, whose midnight
Impending o'er the world, at length breaks forth
In the vaunt lightning's blaze, in storms and thunder
Through all the red'ning air, till frightened Nature
Start from her couch, and waken to a scene
Of uproar and destruction.

Etan. Oh! my father,
The glorious enterprize!

Zamti. Mark me, young man.
Seek thou my friends, Orasming and Zimventi:
In the dim holy cloisters of yon temple
Thou'lt find them musing.—Near Osmingti's tomb
I charge they all convene,—and there do thou
Await my coming—bid them ne'er remit
Their high heroic ardour; let them know,
Whate'er shall fall on this old mould'ring clay,
The tyrant never shall subdue my mind.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter ZAMTI.

Zamti.

DREAM on, deluded tyrant! yes, dream on
In blind security!—whene'er high Heav'n

Means to destroy, it curses with illusion,
 With error of the mind.—Yes, wreak thy fury
 Upon this captive youth;—whoe'er he is,
 If from his death this groaning empire rise,
 Once more itself, resplendent, rich in arts
 That humanize the world,—he pays a debt
 Due to his King, his Country, and his God.
 His father,—wheresoe'er he dwell,—in tears
 Shall tell the glory on his boy deriv'd;
 And ev'n his mother, 'midst her matron shrieks,
 Shall bless the childbed pang that brought him forth
 To this great lot, by fate to few allow'd!——
 What would'st thou, Mirvan?

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Eagerly without
 A rev'rend stranger craves access to Zamti:
 His head hoary with age, with galling tears
 His eyes suffus'd; his ev'ry look impatience——

Zamti. Give him admittance—— [*Exit Mirvan.*]
 ——How my spirits rush
 Tumultuous to my heart—what may this mean?
 Lo! where he comes——

Enter MORAT.

Morat. Zamti!——
Zamti. Ha!—through the veil
 Of age, that face—that mien—*Morat!*——
Morat. Oh! Zamti!
 Let me once more embrace thee——

Zamti. Good old man! [*They embrace.*]

But wherefore art thou here?—what of my boy?

Morat. Ah! what indeed?—Ev'n from the ocean's margin,

Parch'd with the sun, or chill'd with midnight damps,
O'er hills, and rocks, and dreary continents,

In vain I've follow'd——

Zamti. Why didst let him forth?

Morat. Think not thy *Morat* urg'd him to the deed.

His valour was the cause; and soon as fame

Proclaim'd the prince alive, the mighty din

Of preparation through all *Corea's* realm

Alarm'd his breast—Indignant of controul

He burst his covert, and now, hapless youth—

Zamti. Ah!—dead!—in battle fall'n!——

Morat. Alas! ev'n now

He drags the conqu'ror's chain.

Zamti. Mandane then

May still embrace her son!—My boy may live,

To know the sweets of freedom ere he die.

Morat. Alas! the measure of your woes is full!

Unconscious of our frauds, the tyrant thinks

The prince his pris'ner in your son.

Zamti. Ah! *Morat*!

[*Zamti.*]

Morat. Wild through the streets the foe calls out on

Thee they pronounce the author of this fraud;

And on your *Hamet* threaten instant vengeance.

Zamti. There was but this—but this, ye cruel *Pow'rs*,
And this you've heap'd upon me! Was it not

Enough to tear him from his mother's arms—
 Doom'd for his prince to wander o'er the world?
 —Alas! what needed more?—Fond foolish eyes,
 Stop your unbidden gush—tear, tear me piecemeal—
 —No, I will not complain—but whence on him
 Could that suspicion glance?

Morat. This very morn,
 Ere yet the battle join'd, a faithful messenger,
 Who through the friendly gloom of night had held
 His darkling way, and pass'd the Tartar's camp,
 Brought me advices from the Corean chief,
 That soon as Hamet join'd the warlike train,
 His story he related. Straight the gallant leader
 With open arms receiv'd him—knew him for thy son,
 In secret knew him, nor reveal'd he aught
 That touch'd his birth. But still the busy voice
 Of Fame, increasing as she goes, through all the ranks
 Babbled abroad each circumstance. By thee
 How he was privately convey'd—sent forth
 A tender infant to be rear'd in solitude,
 A stranger to himself!—The warriors saw
 With what a graceful port he mov'd in arms,
 An early hero!—deem'd him far above
 The common lot of life—deem'd him Zaphimri,
 And all with reverential awe beheld him.
 This, this, my Zamti, reach'd the tyrant's ear,
 And rises into horrid proof.

Zamti. If so,
 Oh! what a sacrifice must now be made! [*Aside.*

Morat. But when the secret shall be known——

Zamti. Oh! *Morat!*

Does thy poor bleeding country still remain
Dear to thy heart?—Say, dost thou still revere
That holy Pow'r above, Supreme of beings,
Mistaken by the Bonzee, whom our fathers
Worshipp'd in happier days?

Morat. He—only he

For twenty years hath given me strength in exile.

Zamti. Then bending here, before his awful throne,
Swear, what I now unfold, shall ever lie
In sacred silence wrapp'd:

Morat. I swear!

Zamti. Now mark me—— [task,
Morat—my son— [Turning aside.]—Oh! cruel, cruel
To conquer nature while the heart-strings break!

Morat. Why heave those sighs? and why that burst
of grief?

Zamti. My son—his guiltless blood—I cannot speak!

[Bursts into tears.

Morat. Ha!—Wilt thou shed his blood?

Zamti. Thou wretched father!—— [Half aside.

Morat. Oh! had you known the virtues of the youth,
His truth, his courage, his enlighten'd mind——

Zamti. I pry thee urge no more—here Nature's voice
Speaks in such pleadings:—such reproaches, *Morat,*
—Here in my very heart—give woundings here,
Thou canst not know, and only parents feel!

Morat. And wilt thou, cruel in thy tears——

Zamti. Nay cease,

In pity to a father, cease—Think, Morat—
Think of Zaphimri!

Morat. Ah! how fares the prince?

Zamti. He fares, my Morat, like a God on earth,
Unknowing his celestial origin:

Yet quick, intense, and bursting into action;
His great heart lab'ring with—he knows not what—
Prodigious deeds!—Deeds, which ere long shall rouse,
Astonish, and alarm the world.

Morat. What mean
Those mystic sounds?

Zamti. Revenge, conquest, and freedom!—

Morat. Conquest and freedom!

Zamti. Ay! conquest and freedom!

The midnight hour shall call a chosen band
Of hidden patriots forth; who, when the foe
Sinks down in drunken revelry, shall pour
The gather'd rage of twenty years upon him,
And vindicate the eastern world.

Morat. By Heav'n!

The news revives my soul.

Zamti. And can'st thou think,
To save one vulgar life, that Zamti now
Will mar the vast design? No; let him bleed,
Let my boy bleed!—in such a cause as this
I can resign my son—with tears of joy
Resign him!—and one complicated pang
Shall wrench him from my heart.—

The conqu'ror comes! [Warlike music within.
This is no hour for parlying—Morat, hence,

And leave me to my fix'd resolve.

Morat. Yet think, ———

Think of some means to save your Hamet.

Zamti. Oh!

It cannot be—the soul of Timurkan

Is bold and stirring: when occasion calls,

He springs aloft, like an expanding fire,

And marks his way with ruin. Now he knows

Zaphimri lives, his fear will make him daring

Beyond his former crimes—for joy and riot

Which this day's triumph brings, remorseless rage

And massacre succeed—and all our hopes

Are blasted for an unimportant boy.

[A second flourish.]

Morat. That nearer sound proclaims his dread approach.

Yet once more, Zamti, think——

Zamti. No more—I'll send

Those shall conduct thee where Orasming lives.

There dwell unseen of all. But, Morat, first

Seek my Mandane. Heav'ns! how shall I bear

Her strong impetuosity of grief,

When she shall know my fatal purpose? Thou

Prepare her tender spirit; sooth her mind,

And save, oh! save me from that dreadful conflict!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Two large Folding-gates in the back-scene are burst open by the Tartars, and then enter TIMURKAN, with his Train.

Timur. Hail to this regal dome, this gorgeous palace!
Where this inventive race have lavish'd all
Their elegance :—ye gay apartments, hail !
Beneath your storied roof, where mimic life
Glow to the eye, and at the painter's touch
A new creation lives along the walls ;
Once more receive a conqueror, arriv'd
From rougher scenes, where stern rebellion dar'd
Draw forth his phalanx ; till this warlike arm
Hurl'd desolation on his falling ranks,
And now the monster, in yon field of death,
Lies overwhelm'd in ruin.

Oſtar. There he fell,
No more to stalk thy realm : the eastern world,
From this auspicious day, beneath your feet
Lies bound in adamant chains.

Timur. Thus, Oſtar,
Shall Timurkan display his conqu'ring banners,
From high Samarcand's walls, to where the Tanais
Devolves his icy tribute to the sea.

Oſtar. But first this captive prince!—

Timur. Yes, Oſtar, first
Zaphimri gluts my rage—bring him before us—first
We'll crush the seeds of dark conspiracy:

For Zamti—he, that false insidious slave,
Shall dearly pay his treasons.

Ostar. Zamti's crimes

'Twere best to leave unpunished :—vers'd in wiles
Of sly hypocrisy, he wins the love
Of the deluded multitude. 'Twould seem,
Should we inflict that death his frauds deserve,
As if we meant destruction to their faith :
When a whole people's minds are once inflam'd
For their religious rights, their fury burns
With rage more dreadful, as the source is holy. [art

Timur. Ostar, thou reason'st right :—henceforth my
To make this stubborn race receive the yoke,
Shall be by yielding to their softer manners,
Their vesture, laws, and customs : thus to blend
And make the whole one undistinguish'd people.
The boy comes forth in sullen mood—what passions
Swell in his breast in vain!——

Enter HAMET, in Chains.

Timur. Thou art the youth,
Who mow'd our battle down, and flesh'd your sword
In many a slaughter'd Tartar.

Hamet. True ; I am. [hew

Timur. Too well I mark'd thy rage, and saw thee
A wasteful passage through th' embattled plain.

Hamet. Then be thou witness for me, in that hour
I never shunn'd your thickest war ; and if
In yonder field, where my poor countrymen
In mangled heaps lie many a rood extended,

Kind fate had doom'd me to a noble fall,
With this right arm I earn'd it.

Timur. Say, what motive
Unsheathe'd thy rebel blade, and bad thee seek
These wars?

Hamet. The love of honourable deeds,
The groans of bleeding China, and the hate
Of tyrants.

Timur. Ha!—take heed, rash youth—I see
This lesson has been taught thee. Oëtar, haste,
Seek me the Mandarin: let him forthwith [words!
Attend me here. [*Exit Oëtar.*] Now tremble at my
Thy motive to these wars is known—thou art
Zaphimri.

Hamet. I Zaphimri!

Timur. False one, yes:
Thou art Zaphimri—thou!—whom treach'rous guile
Stole from my rage, and sent to distant wilds,
Till years and horrid counsel should mature thee
For war and wild commotion.

Hamet. I the Prince!
The last of China's race! Nay mock not majesty,
Nor with the borrow'd robes of sacred kings
Dress up a wretch like me—Were I Zaphimri,
Think'st thou thy trembling eye could bear the shock
Of a much-injur'd king? Could'st thou sustain it?
Say, could'st thou bear to view a royal Orphan,
Whose father, mother, brother, sisters, all
Thy murd'rous arm hath long since laid in dust?
Whose native crown on thy ignoble brow

Thou dar'st dishonour?—whose wide-wasted country
Thy arms have made a wilderness?

Timur. I see

Thou hast been tutor'd in thy lone retreat
By some sententious pedant. Soon these vain,
These turgid maxims shall be all subdued
By thy approaching death.

Hamet. Let death come on:

Guilt, guilt alone shrinks back appall'd—the brave
And honest still defy his dart;—the wise
Calmly can eye his frown;—and misery
Invokes his friendly aid to end her woes. [fears,

Timur. Thy woes, presumptuous youth, with all my
Shall soon lie buried.

Enter ZAMTI.

Timur. Now, pious false one, say, who is that youth?

Zamti. His air, his features, and his honest mien
Proclaim all fair within. But, mighty Sir,
I know him not.

Timur. Take heed, old man, nor dare,
As thou dost dread my pow'r, to practise guile
Beneath a mask of sacerdotal perfidy:
Priestcraft, I think, calls it a pious fraud.

Zamti. Priestcraft and sacerdotal perfidy
To me are yet unknown. Religion's garb
Here never serves to consecrate a crime:
We have not yet, thank Heav'n, so far imbib'd
The vices of the north!

Timur. Thou vile impostor!

Avow Zaphimri, whom thy treach'rous arts
Conceal'd from justice; or else desolation
Again shall ravage this devoted land.

Zamti. Alas! full well thou know'st, that arm already
Hath shed all royal blood.

Timur. Traitor, 'tis false! —
By thee, vile slave, I have been wrought to think
The hated race destroy'd: thy artful tale
Abus'd my cred'ulous ear. But know, at length
Some captive slaves, by my command impal'd,
Have own'd the horrid truth;—have own'd they fought
To seat Zaphimri on the throne of China.
Hear me, thou froward boy;—darest thou be honest,
And answer who thou art?

Hamet. Dare I be honest?
I dare!—a mind grown up in native honour
Dares not be otherwise—then if thy troops
Ask from the lightning of whose blade they fled,
Tell 'em 'twas Hamet's.

Zamti. 'Tis—it is my son! —
My boy—my Hamet! — [Aside.

Timur. Where was your abode?
Hamet. Far hence remote, in Corea's happy realm,
Where the first beams of day with orient blushes
Tinge the salt wave: there on the sea-beat shore
A cavern'd rock yielded a lone retreat
To virtuous Morat,

Zamti. Oh! ill-fated youth! [Aside.

Hamet. The pious hermit in that moss-grown dwell-
Found an asylum from heart-piercing woes, [ing

From slav'ry, and that restless din of arms
With which thy fell ambition shook the world.
There too the sage nurtur'd my greener years;
With him and contemplation have I walk'd
The paths of wisdom: what the great Confucius
Of moral beauty taught, whate'er the wise,
Still wooing knowledge in her secret haunts,
Disclos'd of Nature to the sons of men,
My wond'ring mind has heard:—but above all,
The hermit taught me the most useful science,
That noble science, to be Brave and Good.

Zamti. Oh! lovely youth!—at ev'ry word he utters,
A soft effusion mix'd of grief and joy
Flows o'er my heart! [*Aside.*]

Timur. Who, said he, was your father?

Hamet. My birth the pious sage—I know not why—
Still wrapp'd in silence; and when urg'd to tell,
He only answer'd that a time might come,
I should not blush to know my father.

Timur. Now
With truth declare, hast thou ne'er heard of *Zamti*?

Hamet. Of *Zamti*!—Oft enraptur'd with his name,
My heart has glow'd within me as I heard
The praises of the godlike man.

Timur. Thou slave, [*To Zamti.*]
Each circumstance arraigns thy guilt!

Hamet. Oh! Heav'ns!
Can that be *Zamti*?

Timur. Yes, that is the traitor.

Hamet. Let me adore his venerable form,

Thus on my knees adore——

Zamti. I cannot look upon him,
Lest tenderness dissolve my feeble pow'rs,
And wrest my purpose from me—— [*Aside.*]

Timur. Hence, vain boy!

Thou specious traitor!—thou false hoary moralist!

[*To Zamti.*]

Confusion has o'erta'en thy subtle frauds.
To make my crown's assurance firm, that none
Hereafter shall aspire to wrench it from me,
Now own your fancied king; or, by yon heav'n,
To make our vengeance sure, through all the east
Each youth shall die, and carnage thin mankind,
Till in the gen'ral wreck your boasted Orphan
Shall undistinguish'd fall. Thou know'st my word
Is fate. Oëtar, draw near—when treason lurks,
Each moment's big with danger—thou observe
These my commands—— [*Talks apart to Oëtar.*]

Zamti. Now virtuous cruelty repress my tears!
Cease your soft conflict, Nature! Hear me, Tartar:
That youth—his air—his ev'ry look unmans me quite.

Timur. Wilt thou begin, dissembler?

Zamti. Down, down, down——
It must be so, or all is lost—That youth,
I've dealt by him—as ev'ry king could wish
In a like case his faithful subjects would.

Timur. Dost thou then own it? Triumph, Timurkan,
And in Zaphimri's grave lie hush'd my fears!
Brave Oëtar, let the victim straight be led
To yonder sacred fane: there, in the view

Of my rejoicing Tartars, the declining sun
Shall see him offered to our living Lama,
For this day's conquest:—thence a golden train
Of radiant years shall mark my future sway. [Exit.

Zamti. Flow, flow, my tears, and ease this aching
breast!

Hamet. Nay, do not weep for me, thou good old man.
If it will close the wounds of bleeding China,
That a poor wretch like me must yield his life,
I give it freely. If I am a king,
Though sure it cannot be, what greater blessing
Can a young prince enjoy, than to diffuse,
By one great act, that happiness on millions,
For which his life should be a round of care?
Come, lead me to my fate. [Exit with Ostar, &c.

Zamti. Hold, hold, my heart!
My gallant, gen'rous youth! Mandane's air,
His mother's dear resemblance rives my soul.

Man. [Within.] Oh! let me fly, and find the barb'
rous man!—

Where—where is Zamti?

Zamti. Ha! 'tis Mandane—
Wild as the winds, the mother all alive
In ev'ry heart-string, the forlorn one comes
To claim her boy!

Enter MANDANE.

Man. And can it then be true?
Is human nature exil'd from thy breast?
Art thou indeed so barb'rous?

Zamti. Lov'd Mandane,
Fix not your scorpions here ; a bearded shaft
Already drinks my spirits up.

Man. I've seen
The trusty Morat---Oh! I've heard it all!--
He would have shunn'd my steps ; but what can 'scape
The eye of tenderness like mine?

Zamti. By heav'n
I cannot speak to thee!

Man. Think'st thou those tears,
Those false, those cruel tears, will choak the voice
Of a fond mother's love, now stung to madness?
Oh! I will rend the air with lamentations,
Root up this hair, and beat this throbbing breast,
Turn all connubial joys to bitterness,
To fell despair, to anguish and remorse,
Unless my son---

Zamti. Thou ever faithful woman,
Oh! leave me to my woes!

Man. Give me my child,
Thou worse than Tartar! give me back my son!
Oh! give him to a mother's eager arms,
And let me strain him to my heart!

Zamti. Heav'n knows
How dear my boy is here!--But our first duty
Now claims attention---to our country's love
All other tender fondnesses must yield:--
---I was a subject ere I was a father.

Man. You were a savage bred in Scythian wilds,
And humanizing pity never reach'd

Your heart--- Was it for this---oh! thou unkind one!
Was it for this---oh! thou inhuman father!
You woo'd me to your nuptial bed?---So long
Have I then clasp'd thee in these circling arms,
And made this breast your pillow?---Cruel, say,
Are these your vows?---are these your fond endear-
Nay, look upon me---if this wasted form, [ments?
These faded eyes have turned your heart against me,
With grief for you I wither'd in my bloom.

Zamti. Why wilt thou pierce my heart?

Man. Alas! my son,
Have I then bore thee in these matron arms,
To see thee bleed?---Thus dost thou then return?
This could your mother hope, when first she sent
Her infant exile to a distant clime?
Ah! could I think thy early love of fame
Would urge thee to this peril?---thus to fall,
By a stern father's will---by thee to die!---
From thee, inhuman, to receive his doom!---
---Murder'd by thee!---Yet hear me, *Zamti*, hear me---
Thus on my knees---I threaten now no more---
'Tis Nature's voice that pleads-- Nature alarm'd,
Quick, trembling, wild, touch'd to her inmost feeling,
When force would tear her tender young ones from her.

Zamti. Nay, seek not with enfeebling fond ideas
To swell the flood of grief---it is in vain---
He must submit to fate!

Man. Barbarian! no--- [She rises hastily.
He shall not die---rather---I prithee, *Zamti*,
Urge not a grief distracted woman!---tremble

At the wild fury of a mother's love!

Zamti. I tremble rather at a breach of oaths.
But thou break thine---bathe your perfidious hands
In this life-blood---betray the righteous cause
Of all our sacred kings.

Man. Our kings!---our kings!---
What are the scepter'd rulers of the world?---
Form'd of one common clay, are they not all
Doom'd with each subject, with the meanest slave,
To drink the cup of human woe?---alike
All levell'd by affliction?---Sacred kings!---
'Tis human policy sets up their claim---
Mine is a mother's cause---mine is the cause
Of husband, wife, and child:---those tend'rest ties!
Superior to your right divine of kings!--- [woman,

Zamti. Then go, Mandane---thou once faithful
Dear to this heart in vain:---go, and forget
Those virtuous lessons, which I oft have taught thee,
In fond credulity, while on each word
You hung enamour'd.---Go, to Timurkan
Reveal the awful truth.---Be thou spectatress
Of murder'd majesty.---Embrace your son,
And let him lead in shame and servitude
A life ignobly bought.---Then let those eyes,
Those faded eyes, which grief for me hath dimm'd,
With guilty joy re-animate their lustre,
To brighten slavery, and beam their fires
On the fell Scythian murderer.

Man. And is it thus,
Thus is Mandane known?---My soul disdains

The vile imputed guilt,---No---never---never---
Still am I true to fame. Come lead me hence,
Where I may lay down life to save Zaphimri,
---But save my Hamet too.---Then, then you'll find
A heart beats here, as warm and great as thine. [effort,

Zamti. Then make with me one strong, one glorious
And rank with those, who, from the first of time,
In Fame's eternal archives stand rever'd,
For conqu'ring all the dearest ties of Nature,
To serve the gen'ral weal.

Man. That savage virtue
Loses with me its horrid charms.---I've sworn
To save my king.---But should a mother turn
A dire assassin?---oh! I cannot bear
The piercing thought!---Distraction, quick distraction
Will seize my brain.---Think thou behold'st my Hamet,
The dear, the lovely youth, my blooming hero!---
Think thou behold'st him---See!---my child!---my
By guards surrounded, a devoted victim!--- [child!
Barbarian, hold!---ah! see, he dies!---he dies!---

[*She faints into Zamti's arms.*

Zamti. Where is Arsace?---Fond maternal love
Shakes her weak frame---

Enter ARSACE.

Quickly, Arsace, help
This ever-tender creature.---Wand'ring life
Rekindles in her cheek.---Soft, lead her off
To where the fanning breeze in yonder bow'r,
May woo her spirits back.---Propitious Heav'n!

Pity the woundings of a father's heart !
 Pity my strugglings with this best of women !
 Support our virtue !---kindle in our souls
 A ray of your divine enthusiasm ;
 Such as inflames the patriot's breast, and lifts
 Th' impassion'd mind to that sublime of virtue,
 That even on the rack it feels the good,
 Which, in a single hour, it works for millions,
 And leaves the legacy to after times !

[Exit, leading off Mandane.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Temple. Several Tombs up and down the Stage.

Enter MORAT.

THIS is the place---these the long winding isles,
 The solemn arches, whose religious awe
 Attunes the mind to melancholy musing,
 Such as befits free men reduc'd to slaves.--
 Here Zamti meets his friends---amid these tombs,
 Where lie the sacred manes of our kings,
 They pour their orisons---hold converse here
 With the illustrious shades of murder'd heroes,
 And meditate a great revenge---(a groan is heard)--
 a groan !

The burst of anguish from some care-worn wretch
 That sorrows o'er his country---ha ! 'tis Zamti !

ZAMTI comes out of a tomb.

Zamti. Who's he that seeks these mansions of the dead ?

Morat. The friend of Zamti and of China.

Zamti. Morat!

Come to my arms, thou good, thou best of men——
I have been weeping o'er the sacred reliques
Of a dear murder'd king---Where are our friends?
Hast seen Orasming?

Morat. Through these vaults of death
Lonely he wanders, plung'd in deep despair.

Zamti. Hast thou not told him?---hast thou nought
Touching Zaphimri? [reveal'd

Morat. There I wait thy will——

Zamti. Oh! thou art ever faithful!—on thy lips
Sits pensive Silence, with her hallow'd finger,
Guarding the pure recesses of thy mind.—
But, lo! they come.

Enter ORASMING, ZIMVENTI, and others.

Zamti. Droop ye, my gallant friends?

Oras. Oh! Zamti, all is lost!---Our dreams of liberty
Are vanish'd into air.——Nought now avails
Integrity of life.——Ev'n Heav'n, combin'd
With lawless might, abandon us and Virtue. [thus

Zamti. Can your great souls thus shrink within ye?
From heroes will ye dwindle into slaves?

Oras. Oh! could you give us back Zaphimri!--then
Danger would smile, and lose it's face of horror.

Zamti. What---would his presence fire ye?

Oras. 'Twould, by Heav'n! [yoke.

Zim. This night should free us from the Tartar's

Zamti. Then mark the care of the all-gracious Gods!

This youthful captive, whom in chains they hold,
Is not Zaphimri.——

Oras. } Not Zaphimri!
Zim. }

Zamti. No!

Unconscious of himself, and to the world unknown,
He walks at large among us.

Oras. Heav'nly Pow'rs!——

Zamti. This night, my friends, this very night to rise
Refulgent from a blow, that frees us all—
From the usurper's fate!——the first of men,
Deliv'rer of his country!——

Oras. Mighty Gods!
Can this be possible?

Zamti. It is most true.

I'll bring him to ye straight---(*calling to Etan, within
the tomb*) what ho!——come forth——

You seem transfix'd with wonder---oh! my friends,
Watch all the motions of your rising spirit,
Direct your ardour, when anon you hear
What fate, long pregnant with the vast event,
Is lab'ring into birth.

ETAN [*comes out of the tomb.*] Each step I move
A deeper horror sits on all the tombs;
Each shrine, each altar seems to shake, as if
Conscious of some important crisis.

Zamti. Yes;

A crisis, great indeed, is now at hand!
Heav'n holds it's golden balance forth, and weighs
Zaphimri's and the Tartar's destiny,

While hov'ring angels tremble round the beam.—
Hast thou beheld that picture ?

Etan. Fix'd attention

Hath paus'd on ev'ry part ; yet still to me
It shadows forth the forms of things unknown ;
All imag'ry obscure, and wrapp'd in darkness.

Zamti. That darkness my informing breath shall clear,
As morn dispels the night. Lo! here display'd
This mighty kingdom's fall.——

Etan. Alas! my father,
At sight of these sad colourings of woe,
Our tears will mix with honest indignation.

Zamti. Nay, but survey it closer——see that child,
That royal infant, the last sacred reliëf
Of China's ancient line——see where a mandarine
Conveys the babe to his wife's fost'ring breast,
There to be nourish'd in an humble state ;
While their own son is sent to climes remote ;
That, should the dire usurper e'er suspect
The Prince alive, he in his stead might bleed,
And mock the murd'rer's rage.

Etan. Amazement thrills
Through all my frame, and my mind, big with wonder,
Feels ev'ry pow'r suspended !

Zamti. Rather say
That strong imagination burns within thee—
Dost thou not feel a more than common ardour ?—

Etan. By heav'n my soul dilates with some new im-
pulse ;
Some strange inspir'd emotion——Would the hour

Of fate were come!—this night my dagger's hilt
I'll bury in the tyrant's heart.

Zamti. Wilt thou?

Etan. By all the mighty dead, that round us lie,
By all who this day groan in chains, I will. [Prince

Zamti. And when thou dost—then tell him 'tis the
That strikes.

Etan. The Prince's wrongs shall nerve my arm
With tenfold rage.

Zamti. Nay, but the Prince himself!

Etan. What says my father?

Zamti. Thou art China's Orphan;
The last of all our kings—no longer Etan,
But now Zaphimri!

Zaph. Ha!

Oras. O wondrous hand
Of Heav'n!

Zaph. A crowd of circumstances rise—
Thy frequent hints obscure—thy pious care
To train my youth to greatness.—Lend your aid
To my astonish'd pow'rs, that feebly bear
This unexpected shock of royalty! [strength,

Zamti. Thou noble youth, now put forth all your
And let Heav'n's vengeance brace each sinew.

Zaph. Vengeance!
That word has shot it's lightning through my soul.—
But tell me, Zamti—still 'tis wonder all—
Am I indeed the Royal Orphan?

Zamti. Thou—
Thou art the king, whom, as my humble son,

I've nurtur'd in humanity and virtue,
Thy foes could never think to find thee here,
Ev'n in the lion's den ; and therefore here
I've fix'd thy safe asylum, while my son
Hath dragg'd his life in exile.—Oh ! my friends,
Morat will tell ye all—each circumstance.
Mean time——there is your king !

[All kneel to him.

Oras. } Long live the Father of the Eastern
Zim. } World !

Zamti. Sole governor of earth !——

Zaph. All-ruling Pow'rs !

Is then a great revenge for all the wrongs
Of Bleeding China—are the fame and fate
Of all posterity included here
Within my bosom ?

[They all rise.

Zamti. Yes ; they are :—the shades
Of your great ancestors now rise before thee,
Heroes and demi-gods :——Aloud they call
For the fell Tartar's blood.

Zaph. Oh ! Zamti ! all
That can alarm the pow'rs of man, now stirs
In this expanding breast——

Zamti. Anon to burst
With hideous ruin on the foe.—My gallant heroes,
Are our men station'd at their posts ?

Oras. They are.

Zamti. Is ev'ry gate secur'd ?

Oras. All safe.

Zamti. The signal fix'd ?

Oras. It is.—Will Mirvan join us?

Zamti. Doubt him not.

In bitterness of soul he counts his wrongs,
And pants for vengeance—would have join'd ye here,
But, favour'd as he is, his post requires him
About the Tartar's person. The assault begun,
He'll turn his arms upon th' astonish'd foe,
And add new horrors to the wild commotion.

Zaph. Now bloody spoiler, now thy hour draws nigh,
And ere the dawn thy guilty reign shall end. [friends,

Zamti. How my heart burns within me!—Oh! my
Call now to mind the scene of desolation,
Which Timurkan, in one accursed hour,
Heap'd on this groaning land!—Ev'n now I see
The savage bands, o'er reeking hills of dead,
Forcing their rapid way.—I see them urge
With rage unhallow'd to this sacred temple,
Where good Osmintgi, with his queen and children,
Fatigu'd the Gods averse. See where Arphisa,
Rending the air with agonizing shrieks,
Tears her dishevell'd hair:—then, with a look
Fix'd on her babes, grief choaks its passage up,
And all the feelings of a mother's breast
Throbbing in one mix'd pang, breathless she faints
Within her husband's arms. Adown his cheek,
In copious streams fast flow'd the manly sorrow,
While clust'ring round his knees his little offspring,
In tears all-eloquent, with arms outstretch'd,
Sue for parental aid.——

Zaph. Go on—the tale

Will fit me for a scene of horror.

Zamti. Oh! my prince,

The charge, which your great father gave me still
Sounds in my ear. Ere yet the foe burst in,

'Zamti,' said he—Ah! that imploring eye!

That agonizing look!—

'Preserve my little boy, my cradled infant—

'Shield him from ruffians—train his youth to Virtue:—

'Virtue will rouse him to a great revenge;

'Or failing, Virtue shall still make him happy.'

He could no more—the cruel spoiler seiz'd him,

And dragg'd my king—my ever honour'd king—

The father of his people—basely dragg'd him

By his white rev'rend locks, from yonder altar,

Here—on the blood-stain'd pavement; while the queen,

And her dear fondlings, in one mangled heap,

Died in each other's arms!

Zaph. Revenge! revenge!

With more than lion's nerve I'll spring upon him,

And at one blow relieve the groaning world.

Let us this moment carry sword and fire

To yon devoted walls, and overwhelm him down

In ruin and dismay.

Zamti. Zaphimri, no.

By rashness you may mar a noble cause.

To you, my friends, I render up my charge—

To you I give your king. Farewel, my sov'reign!—

Zaph. Thou good, thou godlike man!—a thousand

Of warmest friendship—all the tendencies [feelings

Of heart-felt gratitude are struggling here,

And fain would speak to thee, my more than father!
—Farewell!—sure we shall meet again!

Zamti. We shall——

Zaph. Farewell!—*Zamti*, farewell!—[*Embraces him*]—

Orasming, now

The noblest duty calls us. Now remember
We are the men, whom from all human kind
Our fate hath now selected, to come forth
Asserters of the public weal;—to drench our swords
In the oppressor's heart;—to do a deed
Which Heav'n, intent on it's own holy work,
Shall pause with pleasure to behold.

[*Exit, with Conspirators.*]

Zamti. May the Most High

Pour down his blessings on him! and anon,
In the dead waste of night, when awful Justice
Walks with her crimson steel o'er slaughter'd heaps
Of groaning Tartars, may he then direct
His youthful footsteps through the paths of peril!
Oh may he guide the horrors of the storm,
An angel of your wrath, to point your vengeance
On ev'ry guilty head! Then—then, 'twill be enough,
When you have broken the oppressor's rod,
Your reign will then be manifest—Mankind will see
That truth and goodness still obtain your care——

[*A dead march.*]

What mean those deathful sounds?—Again!—They lead
My boy to slaughter!—Oh! look down, ye heavens!
Look down propitious!—Teach me to subdue
That nature which ye gave!——[*Exit.*]

A dead March. Enter HAMET, OCTAR, Guards, &c.

Octar. Here let the victim fall, and with his blood
Wash his forefathers' tomb. Here ends the hated race—
The eastern world, through all her wide domain,
Shall then submissive feel the Scythian yoke,
And yield to Timurkan.

Hamet. [*Standing by the tomb.*] Where is the tyrant?

I would have him see,
With envy see, th' unconquer'd pow'r of Virtue;
How it can calmly bleed, smile on his racks,
And with strong pinion soar above his pow'r,
To regions of perennial day.

Octar. The father
Of the whole eastern world shall mark thee well,
When at to-morrow's dawn thy breathless corse
Is borne through all our streets for public view.
It now befits thee to prepare for death.

Hamet. I am prepar'd. I have no lust or rapine,
No murders to repent of. Undismay'd
I can behold all-judging Heav'n, whose hand
Still compassing it's wondrous ends, by means
Inextricable to all mortal clue,
Hath now inclos'd me in it's awful maze.
Since 'tis by your decree that thus beset
Th' inexorable angel hovers o'er me,
Be your great bidding done!

Octar. The sabre's edge
Thirsts for his blood—then let it's lightning fall
On his aspiring head. [*Guards seize Hamet.*

Man. [*within*] Off—set me free!—inhuman, barbarous ruffians!—

Oſtar. What means that woman with dishevell'd hair,
And wild extravagance of woe?—

Man. My griefs
Scorn all restraint---I must---I will have way!

[*She enters, and throws herself on her knees.*]

Me—me—on me convert your rage—plunge deep,
Deep in this bosom your abhorred steel,
But spare his precious life!

Oſtar. Hence, quickly bear
This wild, this frantic woman.

Man. Never, never—
You shall not force me hence. Here will I cling
Fast to the earth, and rivet here my hands,
In all the fury of the last despair!
He is my child!—my dear, dear son!

Oſtar. How, woman!
Saidst thou your son?

Man. Yes, Oſtar, mine;—my son,
My boy—my Hamet! [*she rises, and embraces him.*] Let
my eager love

Fly all unbounded to him---oh! my child!---my child!

Oſtar. Suspend the stroke, ye ministers of death,
Till Timurkan hear of this new event.
Mean time, thou, Mirvan, speed in quest of Zamti,
And let him answer here this wondrous tale. [*Exit.*]

Mir. The time demands his presence; or despair
May wring each secret from her tender breast. [*Aside.*]
And then our glorious, fancied pile of freedom,

At one dire stroke, shall tumble into nought. *[Exit.]*

Man. Why did'st thou dare return?---ah! rather
Did'st thou so long defer, with ev'ry grace,
And ev'ry growing virtue, thus to raise
Your mother's dear delight to rapture?

Hamet. Lost
In the deep mists of darkling ignorance,
To me my birth's unknown---but sure that look,
Those tears, those shrieks, that animated grief
Defying danger, all declare th' effect
Of Nature's strugglings in a parent's heart.
Then let me pay my filial duty here,
Kneel to her native dignity, and pour
In tears of joy the transport of a son!

Man. Thou art, thou art my son!--thy father's face,
His ev'ry feature, blooming in his boy!
Oh! tell me, tell me all--how hast thou liv'd
With faithful Morat?--how did he support
In dreary solitude thy tender years?--
How train thy growing mind?--oh! quickly tell me,
Oh! tell me all, and charm me with thy tongue!

Hamet. Mysterious Pow'rs! have I then liv'd to this,
In th' hour of peril thus to find a parent,
In virtue firm, majestic in distress,
At length to feel unutterable bliss
In her dear circling arms----- *[They embrace.]*

Enter TIMURKAN, OCTAR, &c.

Timur. Where is this wild
Outrageous woman, who with headlong grief

Suspends my dread command?---Tear 'em asunder—
 Send her to some dark cell to rave and shriek
 And dwell with madness---and let instant death
 Leave that rash youth a headless trunk before me.

Man. Now, by the ever-burning lamps that light
 Our holy shrines, by great Confucius' altar,
 By the prime source of life, and light, and being,
 That is my child, the blossom of my joys!
 Send for his cruel father—he—'tis he
 Intends a fraud---he, for a stranger's life,
 Would yield his offspring to the cruel axe,
 And rend a wretched mother's brain with madness!

Enter ZAMTI.

Zamti. Sure the sad accents of Mandane's voice
 Struck on my frightened sense!

Timur. Once more, thou slave!
 Who is that stubborn youth?

Zamti. Alas! what needs
 This iteration of my griefs?

Man. Oh! horror!—horror!
 Thou marble-hearted father!—'tis your child,
 And would'st thou see him bleed?

Zamti. On him!--on him
 Let fall your rage, and ease my soul at once
 Of all it's fears!

Man. Oh! my devoted child!— [She faints.

Hamet. Support her, Heav'n! support her tender
 frame!—

Now, tyrant, now I beg to live—[kneels] lo! here

I plead for life ;—not for the wretched boon
To breathe the air, which thy ambition taints ;—
But oh ! to ease a mother's pains ;—for her,
For that dear object---oh ! let me live for her !

Timur. Now by the conquests this good sword has
In her wild vehemence of grief I hear [won,
The genuine voice of Nature.

Man. [recovering]. Ah !——where is he ?
He is my son !---my child !—and not Zaphimri !—
Oh ! let me clasp thee to my heart !—thy hard,
Thy cruel father shall not tear thee from me !

Timur. Hear me, thou frantic mourner, dry those
Perhaps you still may save this darling son. [tears—

Man. Ah ! quickly name the means !

Timur. Give up your king,
Your phantom of a king, to sate my vengeance.

Hamet. Oh ! my much honour'd mother, never hear
The base, the dire proposal !—let me rather
Exhaust my life-blood at each gushing vein.
Mandane then—then you may well rejoice
To find your child—then you may truly know
The best delight a mother's heart can prove,
When her son dies with glory.

Timur. Curses blast
The stripling's pride—[Talks apart with Ostar.

Zanti. Ye venerable host,
Ye mighty shades of China's royal line,
Forgive the joy that mingles with my tears,
When I behold him still alive !—Propitious Pow'rs !
You never meant entirely to destroy

This bleeding country, when your kind indulgence
Lends us a youth like him.

Oh! I can hold no more—let me infold
That lovely ardour in his father's arms—
My brave—my gen'rous boy!—— [*Embraces him.*

Timur. Dost thou at length
Confess it, traitor?

Zamti. Yes, I boast it, tyrant;
Boast it to thee—to earth and heav'n I boast,
This—this is Zamti's son!

Hamet. At length the hour,
The glorious hour is come, by Morat promis'd,
“When Hamet shall not blush to know his father.”

[*Kneels to him.*

Zamti. Oh! thou intrepid youth!—what bright re-
Can your glad sire bestow on such desert?—ward
The righteous Gods and your own inward feelings
Shall give the sweetest retribution.—Now,
Mandane, now my soul forgives thee all,
Since I have made acquaintance with my son;
Thy lovely weakness I can now excuse;
But oh! I charge thee by a husband's right——

Timur. A husband's right!—a traitor has no right—
Society disclaims him—Woman, hear——
Mark well my words—Discolour not thy soul
With the black hue of crimes like his—renounce
All hymeneal vows, and take again
Your much-lov'd boy to his fond mother's arms,
While justice whirls that traitor to his fate.

Man. Thou vile adviser!—what, betray my lord,

My honour'd husband?—Turn a Scythian wife?
Forget the many years of fond delight,
In which my soul ne'er knew decreasing love,
Charm'd with his noble, all-accomplish'd mind?
No, tyrant, no!—with him I'll rather die;
With him in ruin more supremely blest,
Than guilt triumphant on it's throne.

Zamti. Now then,
Inhuman Tartar, I defy thy pow'r.
Lo! here, the father, mother, and the son!
Try all your tortures on us—here we stand
Resolv'd to leave a tract of bright renown
To mark our beings—all resolv'd to die.
The votaries of honour!— [the slaves,

Timur. Then die ye shall—what ho!—guards, seize
Deep in some baleful dungeon's midnight gloom
Let each apart be plung'd—and Etan too—
Let him be forthwith found—he too shall share
His father's fate.

Mir. Be it my task, dread Sir,
To make the rack ingenious in new pains,
Till even cruelty almost relent
At their keen, agonizing groans.

Timur. Be that,
Mirvan, thy care. Now by th' immortal Lama
I'll wrest this myst'ry from 'em---else the dawn
Shall see me up in arms---'gainst Corea's chief
I will unfurl my banners---his proud cities
Shall dread my thunder at their gates, and mourn
Their smoaking ramparts---o'er his verdant plains

And peaceful vales I'll drive my warlike car,
And deluge all the east with blood. [Exit.

Otar. Mirvan, do thou bear hence those miscreant
slaves.

Thou, Zamti, art my charge. [Laying hold of him.

Zamti. Willing I come—— [Shakes him off.

The steady mind can scorn your mansions drear,
And brighten horror with it's noon-tide ray.
Mandane, summon all thy strength. My son,
Thy father doubts not of thy fortitude.

[Exit, guarded by Otar.

Man. Allow me but one last embrace——

Hamet. Oh! mother, [To the Guards.

Would I could rescue thee!

Man. Lost, lost again!

Hamet. Inhuman, bloody Tartars!

Oh! farewell! [Both together.]

[Exeunt, on different sides.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Prison. HAMET in Chains. Enter ZAPHIMRI, (dis-
guised in a Tartar Dress) with MIRVAN.

Mirvan.

THERE stretch'd at length on the dank ground he lies,
Scorning his fate. Your meeting must be short.

Zaph. It shall——

Mir. And yet I tremble for th' event:——

Why would'st thou venture to this place of danger?

Zaph. And can'st thou deem me then so mean of
To dwell secure in ignominious safety;
With cold-insensibility to wait
The ling'ring hours—with coward patience wait 'em,
Deliberating on myself, while ruin
Nods over Zamti's house?

Mir. Yet whilst thou'rt here,
Thy fate's suspended on each dreadful moment.

Zaph. I will hold converse with him, ev'n tho' death
Were arm'd against the interview. — [*Exit Mirvan.*]

Hamet. [*still on the ground.*]—What wouldst thou,
Tartar?

Zaph. Rise, noble youth—no vulgar errand mine—

Hamet. [*comes forward.*] Now speak thy purpose.

Zaph. Under this disguise——

Hamet. If under that disguise, a murd'rer's dagger
Thirst for my blood—thus I can meet the blow.

[*Throwing himself open.*]

Zaph. No ruffian's purpose lurks within this bosom.
To these lone walls, where oft the Scythian stabber
With murd'rous stride hath come; these walls that oft
Have seen th' assassin's deeds—I bring a mind
Firm, virtuous, upright, Under this vile garb,
Lo! here a son of China. [*Opens his dress.*]

Hamet. Yes, thy garb
Denotes a son of China; and those eyes
Roll with no black intent.—Say on——

Zaph. Inflam'd with admiration of heroic deeds,
I come to seek acquaintance with the youth,

Who for his king would bravely die!

Hamet. Say then,
Dost thou applaud the deed?

Zaph. By heav'n, I do.
Yes, virtuous envy rises in my soul—
Thy ardour charms me, and ev'n now I pant
To change conditions with thee.—

Hamet. Then my heart
Accepts thy proffer'd friendship. In a base,
A prone, degen'rate age, when foreign force
And foreign manners have o'erwhelm'd us all,
And sunk our native genius—thou retain'st
A sense of ancient worth. But wherefore here,
To this sad mansion, this abode of sorrow,
Com'st thou to know a wretch that soon must die?

Zaph. By heav'n, thou shalt not die—I come to speak
The gladsome tidings of a happier fate.

—By me Zaphimri sends—

Hamet. Zaphimri sends!
Kind Pow'rs! Where is the king?

Zaph. His steps are safe;
Unseen as is the arrow's path. By me he says,
He knows, he loves, he wonders at thy virtue.
By me he swears, rather than thou should'st fall,
He will emerge from dark obscurity,
And greatly brave his fate.

Hamet. Ha!—die for me!
For me, ignoble in the scale of being!
An unimportant wretch! Whoe'er thou art,
I pr'ythee, stranger, bear my answer back—

Oh! tell my sov'reign that here dwells a heart
 uperior to all peril. When I fall,
 A worm—an insect dies!—But in his life
 Are wrapp'd the glories of our ancient line,
 The liberties of China! Then let him
 Live for his people—he it mine to die.

Zaph. Can I bear this, ye Pow'rs, and not dissolve
 In tears of gratitude and love? [Aside.

Hamet. Why streams
 That flood of grief?—and why that stifled groan?
 Through the dark mist his sorrow casts around him,
 He seems no common man. Say, gen'rous youth,
 Who, and what art thou?

Zaph. Who and what am I?
 Thou lead'st me to a precipice, from whence
 Downward to look, turns wild the mad'ning brain,
 Scar'd at th' unfathomable deep below.
 Who, and what am I?—Oh! the veriest wretch
 That ever yet groan'd out his soul in anguish!
 One lost, abandon'd, hopeless, plung'd in woe
 Beyond redemption's aid.—To tell thee all
 In one dire word, big with the last distress,
 In one accumulated term of horror—
 —Zaphimri!—

Hamet. Said'st thou!—

Zaph. He!—that fatal wretch,
 Exalted into misery supreme.
 Oh! I was happy, while good Zamti's son
 I walk'd the common tracts of life, and strove
 Humbly to copy my imagin'd sire.
 But now——

Hamet. Yes now—if thou art he—as sure
'Tis wondrous like—rais'd to a state, in which
A nation's happiness on thee depends——

Zaph. A nation's happiness!—There, there I bleed!
There are my pangs! For me this war began,
For me hath purple slaughter drench'd yon fields;
I am the cause of all. I forg'd those chains—
For Zamti and Mandane too—Oh! heavens!—
Them have I thrown into a dungeon's gloom.
These are the horrors of Zaphimri's reign.
—I am the tyrant!—I ascend the throne
By trampling on the neck of innocence—
By base ingratitude!—by the vile means
Of selfish cowardice, that can behold
Thee, and thy father, mother, all in chains,
All lost, all murder'd, that I thence may rise
Inglorious to a throne!

Hamet. Alas! thy spirit,
Thy wild disorder'd fancy pictures forth
Ills that are not—or, being ills, not worth
A moment's pause.

Zaph. Not ill? Thou can'st not mean it.
Oh! I'm environ'd with the worst of woes!
The angry Fates, amidst their hoards of vengeance,
Had nought but this—they meant to render me
Peculiarly distress'd. Tell me, thou gallant youth—
—A soul like thine knows ev'ry fine emotion—
Is there a nerve, in which the heart of man
Can prove such torture, as when thus it meets
Unequall'd friendship, honour, truth, and love,

And no return can make?——Oh! 'tis too much,
 Ye mighty Gods, too much—thus, thus to be
 A feeble prince, a shadow of a king,
 Without the pow'r to wreak revenge on guilt,
 Without the pow'r of doing Virtue right!

Hamet. That power will come.

Zaph. But when?—when thou art lost,
 When Zamti and Mandane are destroy'd.
 Oh! for a dagger's point, to plunge it deep,
 Deep in this—ha!—deep in the tyrant's heart!

Hamet. There your revenge should point. For that
 great deed

Heav'n hath watch'd all thy ways; and wilt thou now
 With headlong rage spurn at it's guardian care,
 Nor wait the movements of eternal justice? [Heav'n

Zaph. Ha!—whither has my phrenzy stray'd? Yes,
 Has been all-bounteous. Righteous Pow'rs!
 To you my orisons are due—But oh!
 Complete your goodness:—save this valiant youth;
 Save Zamti's house; and then—if such your will,
 That from the Tartar's head my arm this night
 Shall grasp the crown of China---teach me then
 To bear your dread vicegerency—I stand
 Resign'd to your high will.

Hamet. And Heav'n, I trust,
 Will still preserve thee; in it's own good time
 Will finish it's decrees.

Zaph. Yes, Hamet, yes;
 A gleam of hope remains. Should Timurkan
 Defer his murder to the midnight hour,

Then will I come, then burst these guilty walls,
Rend those vile manacles, and give thee freedom.

Hamet. Oh! no---you must not risk.

Zaph. A band of heroes

For this are ready; honourably leagu'd
To vindicate their rights. Thy father's care
Plann'd and inspir'd the whole. Among the troops,
Nay in his very guards, there are not wanting
Some gallant sons of China, in that hour,
Who will discover their long-pent-up fury,
And deal destruction round.

Hamet. What---all conven'd,
And ev'ry thing dispos'd?

Zaph. Determin'd!---Now
In silent terror all intent they stand,
And wait the signal in each gale that blows.

Hamet. Why did'st thou venture forth?

Zaph. What, poorly lunk [youth,
While my friends die!---that thought---but, generous
I'll not think meanly of thee---No---that thought
Is foreign to thy heart.

Hamet. But think, my prince,
On China's wrongs, the dying heroes' groans;
Think on thy ancestors.

Zaph. My ancestors!
What is't to me a long-descended line,
A race of worthies, legislators, heroes,
Unless I bring their virtues too? No more---
Thy own example fires me. Near this place
I'll take my stand, and watch their busy motions,

Until the gen'ral roar ; then will I come,
And arm thee for th' assault.

Hamet. Oh ! if thou dost,
Yet once again I'll wield the deathful blade,
And bear against the foe.

Zaph. Yes, thou and I
Will rush together through the paths of death,
Mow down our way, and with sad overthrow
Pursue the Tartar---like two rushing torrents,
That from the mountain's top, 'midst roaring caves,
'Midst rocks and rent up trees, foam headlong down,
And each depopulates his way.——

[*A flourish of trumpets.*

Hamet. What means
That sudden and wild harmony ?

Zaph. Even now
The conqu'ror, and his fell barbaric rout,
For this day's victory indulge their joy ;
Joy soon to end in groans---for all conspires
To forward our design---and lo ! the lights
That whilom blaz'd to heav'n, now rarely seen,
Shed a pale glimmer, and the foe secure
Sinks down in deep debauch ; while all awake,
The Genius of this land broods o'er the work
Of justice and revenge.

Hamet. Oh ! revel on,
Still unsuspecting plunge in guilty joy,
And bury thee in riot !

Zaph. Ne'er again
To wake from that vile trance---for ere the dawn,

Detested spoiler; thy hot blood shall smoke
On the stain'd marble, and thy limbs abhorr'd
I'll scatter to the dogs of China.

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Break off your conference---Ostar this way comes.

Zaph. This garb will cloak me from each hostile eye;
Thou need'st not fear detection.

Enter OCTAR.

Mir. There's your pris'ner. [*Pointing to Hamet.*

Ostar. Lead him to where Mandane's matron grief
Rings through yon vaulted roof.

Hamet. Oh! lead me to her!

Let me give balm to her afflicted mind,
And soften anguish in a parent's breast.

[*Exit, with Mirvan.*

Zaph. What may this mean? I dread some lurking
mischief. [*Exit on the opposite side.*

Ostar. When the boy clings around his mother's heart
In fond endearment, then to tear him from her,
Will once again awaken all her tenderness,
And in her impotence of grief, the truth
At length will burst it's way. But Timurkan
Impatient comes.

Enter TIMURKAN.

Ostar. Thus with disorder'd looks,
Why will my'sov'reign shun the genial banquet,

To seek a dungeon's gloom?

Timur. Oh! valiant Ostar,

A more than midnight gloom involves my soul.

Hast thou beheld this stubborn Mandarin? [geance

Ostar. I have; and tried by ev'ry threaten'd ven-

To bend his soul: unconquer'd yet by words,

He smiles contempt; as if some inward joy,

Like the sun, lab'ring in a night of clouds,

Shot forth it's glad'ning unresisted beams,

Cheering the face of woe.

Timur. What of Mandane?

Ostar. At first with tears and bitter lamentations

She call'd on Hamet lost; but when I urg'd,

She still might save her boy, and save herself,

Would she but give Zaphimri to your wrath,

Her tears forgot to flow; her voice, her look,

Her colour sudden chang'd, and all her form

Enlarging with th' emotions of her soul,

Grew vaster to the sight. With blood-shot eyes

She cast a look of silent indignation,

Then turn'd in sullen mood away.

Timur. Perdition

O'erwhelm her pride!

Ostar. Might I advise you, Sir,

An artful tale of love should softly glide

To her afflicted soul—a conqu'ror's sighs

Will waft a thousand wishes to her heart,

Till female vanity aspire to reach

The eastern throne; and when her virtue melts

In the soft tumult of her gay desires,

Win from her ev'ry truth, then spurn to shame
The weak, deluded woman.

Timur. Oëtar, no:

I cannot stoop with love-sick adulation
To thrill in languishing desire, and try
The hopes, the fears, and the caprice of love.
Enur'd to rougher scenes, far other arts
My mind employ'd: to sling the well-stor'd quiver
Over this manly arm, and wing the dart
At the fleet rein-déer, sweeping down the vale,
Or up the mountain, straining ev'ry nerve;
To vault the neighing steed, and urge his course
Swifter than whirlwinds; through the ranks of war
To drive my chariot-wheels, smoking with gore:
These are my passions, this my only science,
Above the puling sicknesses of love.
Bring that vile slave, the hoary priest, before me.

[*Exit Oëtar.*]

Timur. By heav'n, their fortitude erects a fence
To shield 'em from my wrath, more pow'rful far
Than their high-boasted wall, which long hath stood
The shock of time, of war, of storms, and thunder,
The wonder of the world!
What art thou, Virtue, who can'st thus inspire
This stubborn pride, this dignity of soul,
And still unfading, beauteous in distress,
Can'st taste of joys my heart hath never known?

Enter ZAMTI, in Chains.

Timur. Mark me, thou traitor, thy detested sight

Once more I brook, to try if yet the sense
Of deeds abhorr'd as thine, has touch'd your soul.
Or clear this myst'ry, or by yonder heav'n
I'll hunt Zaphimri to his secret haunt,
Or spread a gen'ral carnage round the world.

Zamti. Thy rage is vain—far from thy ruthless pow'r
Kind heav'n protects him, till the awful truth
In some dread hour of horror and revenge
Shall burst like thunder on thee.

Timur. Ha! beware—
Nor rouse my lion-rage—yet, ere 'tis late,
Repent thee of thy crimes.

Zamti. The crime would be
To yield to thy unjust commands. But know,
A louder voice than thine forbids the deed;
The voice of all my kings! Forth from their tombs
Ev'n now they send a peal of groans to Heav'n,
Where all thy murders are long since gone up,
And stand in dread array against thee.

Timur. Murders!
Ungrateful Mandarin! Say, did not I,
When civil discord lighted up her brand,
And scatter'd wide her flames---when fierce contention
'Twixt Xohohamti and Zaphimri's father
Sorely convuls'd the realm---did not I then
Lead forth my Tartars from their northern frontier,
And bid fair order rise?

Zamti. Bid order rise!
Hast thou not smote us with a hand of wrath?
By thee each art has died, and ev'ry science

Gone out at thy fell blast. Art thou not come
To sack our cities, to subvert our temples,
The temples of our Gods, and with the worship,
The monstrous worship of your living Lama,
Profane our holy shrines?

Timur. Peace, insolent!
Nor dare with horrid treason to provoke
The wrath of injur'd majesty.

Zamti. Yes, tyrant,
Yes, thou hast smote us with a hand of wrath;
Full twenty years hast smote us; but at length
Will come the hour of Heav'n's just visitation,
When thou shalt rue—hear me, thou man of blood—
Yes, thou shalt rue the day, when thy fell rage
Imbrued those hands in royal blood. Now tremble—
The arm of the Most High is bar'd against thee—
And see!—the hand of Fate describes thy doom
In glaring letters on yon rubied wall!
Each gleam of light is perish'd out of Heav'n,
And darkness rushes o'er the face of earth.

Timur. Think'st thou, vile slave, with visionary fears
I e'er can shrink appall'd? Thou moon-struck seer!
No more I'll bear this mockery of words:
Or straight resolve me, or by hell and vengeance,
Unheard-of torment waits thee.

Zamti. Know'st thou not
I offer'd up my boy? And after that,
After that conflict, think'st thou there is aught
Zamti has left to fear?——

Timur. Yes, learn to fear

My will, my sov'reign will, which here is law,
And treads upon the neck of slaves.

Zamti. Thy will

The law in China! Ill-instructed man!
Now learn an awful truth—Though ruffian pow'r
May for a while suppress all sacred order,
And trample on the rights of man, the soul,
Which gave our legislation life and vigour,
Shall still subsist, above the tyrant's reach:—
The spirit of the laws can never die.

Timur. I'll hear no more. What ho!

Enter OCTAR and Guards.

Bring forth Mandane—

Ruin involves ye all—this very hour
Shall see your son impal'd: yes, both your sons.
Let Etan be brought forth.

Octar. Etan, my liege,
Is fled for safety.

Timur. Thou pernicious slave! [To Zamti.
Him too would'st thou withdraw from justice?—him
Would'st thou send hence to Corea's realm, to brood
Q'er some new work of treason? By the pow'rs
Who feel a joy in vengeance, and delight
In human blood, I will unchain my fury
On all, who trace Zaphimri in his years;
But chief on thee and thy devoted race.

Enter MANDANE and HAMET. MIRVAN guarding them, &c.

Timur. Woman, attend my words—instant reveal
This dark conspiracy, and save thyself.
If wilful thou wilt spurn the joys that woo thee,
The rack shall have it's prey.

Man. It is in vain.

I tell thee, Homicide, my soul is bound
By solemn vows: and would'st thou have me break—
What angels wafted on their wings to Heav'n?

Timur. Renounce your rash resolves, nor court
destruction.

Mah. Goddess of Vengeance, from your realms above,
Where near the throne of the Most High thou dwell'st,
Inspired in darkness, amidst hoards of thunder,
Serenely dreadful, till dire human crimes
Provoke thee down; now, on the whirlwind's wing
Descend, and with your flaming sword, your bolts
Red with almighty wrath, let loose your rage,
And blast this vile seducer in his guilt. [boy.

Timur. Blind frantic woman!—think on your lov'd

Man. That tender struggle's o'er—if he must die,
I'll greatly dare to follow.

Timur. Then forthwith

I'll put thee to the proof—Drag forth the boy
To instant death—— [They seize Hamet.

Hamet. Come on then—Lead me hence
To some new world where justice reigns, for here
Thy iron hand is stretch'd o'er all. [Exit, guarded.

Timur. Quick, drag him forth.

Man. Now by the Pow'rs above, by ev'ry tie
Of humanizing pity, seize me first;
Oh! spare my child, and end his wretched mother!

Timur. Thou plead'st in vain.

Enter a Messenger in haste.

Mess. Etan, dread Sir, is found.

Zamti. Ah! China totters on the brink of ruin!

[*Aside.*

Timur. Where lurk'd the slave?

Mess. Emerging from disguise,
He rush'd amid the guards that led forth Hamet:
"Suspend the stroke," he cry'd: then crav'd admit-
tance

To your dread presence, on affairs, he says,
Of highest import to your throne and life.

Zamti. Ruin impends. [*Aside.*] Heed not an idle
boy.— [*To Timurkan.*

Timur. Yes, I will see him: bring him straight be-
fore me.

Zamti. Angels of light, quick on the rapid wing
Dart from the throne of grace, and hover round him!

Enter ZAPHIMRI, Guards following him.

Timur. Thou com'st on matters of importance Tdeep
Unto my throne and life—

Zaph. I do.—This very hour
Thy death is plotting.

Timur. Ha!—by whom?

Zafb. Zaphimri!

Zamti. What means my son?—

Timur. Quick, give him to my rage,
And mercy shall to thee extend.

Zafb. Think not

I meanly come to save this wretched being.

Pity Mandane—save her tender frame!—[*Kneels.*

Pity that youth!—oh! save that godlike man!

Zamti. Wilt thou dishonour me, degrade thyself,
Thy native dignity, by basely kneeling?

Quit that vile posture.

Timur. Rash intruder, hence.—— [To *Zamti.*
Hear me, thou stripling;—or unfold thy tale,
Or by yon heav'n they die—Would'st thou appease
my wrath,

Bring me Zaphimri's head.

Zafb. Will that suffice?

Zamti. Oh! Heavens!

[*Aside.*

Timur. It will——

Zafb. Then take it, tyrant.

[*Rising up, and pointing to himself.*

Zamti and Hamet. Ah!——

Zafb. I am Zaphimri—I your mortal foe!

Zamti. Now by yon heav'n, it is not——

Zafb. Here——strike here——

Since nought but royal blood can quench thy thirst,
Unsluice these veins—but spare their matchless lives,

Timur. Would'st thou deceive me too?

Zamti. He would——

Zafb. No——here,

Here on his knees, Zaphimri begs to die.

Zamti. Oh! horror, 'tis my son!—by great Confucius,
That is my Etan, my too gen'rous boy,
That fain would die to save his aged sire!

Man. Alas! all's ruin'd—freedom is no more! [*Aside,*

Zaph. Yet hear me, Tartar—hear the voice of truth—
I am your victim—by the Gods, I am.

[*Laying bold of Timurkan.*

Timur. Thou early traitor!—by your guilty sire
Train'd up in fraud—no more these arts prevail.
My rage is up in arms, ne'er to know rest,
Until Zaphimri perish.—Off, vile slave!—
This very moment sweep 'em from my sight.

Man. Alas! my husband—Oh! my son—my son!

Zamti. May all the host of Heav'n protect him still!
[*Exeunt Zamti and Mandane, guarded by Oclar, &c.*

ZAPHIMRI, struggling with TIMURKAN, on his knees.

Zaph. Ah! yet withhold—in pity hold a moment—
I am Zaphimri—I resign my crown—— [hold

Timur. Away, vain boy! Go see them bleed; be-
How they will writhe in pangs; pangs doom'd for thee,
And ev'ry stripling through the East. Vile slave,
away! [Breaks from him, and exit.

ZAPHIMRI, lying on the Ground; Officers and Guards
behind him.

Oh! cruel!—yet a moment—barbarous Scythians!
Wilt thou not open, earth, and take me down,
Down to thy caverns of eternal darkness,

From this supreme of woe ? Here will I lie,
 Here on thy flinty bosom—with this breast
 I'll harrow up my grave, and end at once
 This pow'rless wretch—this ignominious king !
 And sleeps almighty Justice ? Will it not
 Now waken all it's terrors ?—arm yon band
 Of secret heroes with avenging thunder ? [slou
 By heaven that thought [*rising*] lifts up my kindling
 With renovated fire. [*Aside.*] My glorious friends,
 (Who now convene big with your country's fate)
 When I am dead—oh ! give me just revenge !
 Let not my shade rise unatton'd amongst ye ;
 Let me not die inglorious ; make my fall,
 With some great act of yet unheard-of vengeance,
 Resound throughout the world ; that farthest Scythia
 May stand appall'd at the huge distant roar
 Of one vast ruin tumbling on the heads
 Of this fell tyrant, and his hated race.

[*Exit, guarded.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

*The Palace. Enter OCTAR, ZAMTI and MANDANE
 following him.*

Zamti.

WHY dost thou lead us to this hated mansion ?
 Must we again behold the tyrant's frown ?
 Thou know'st our hearts are fix'd.

Otar. The war of words

We scorn again to wage : thither ye come
Beneath a monarch's eye to meet your doom.
The rack is now preparing : Timurkan
Shall soon behold your pangs, and count each groan
Ev'n to the fullest luxury of vengeance.
Guard well that passage : [*to the Guards within.*]—
see these traitors find
No means of flight ; while to the conqueror
I hasten, to receive his last commands.

[*Exit Oſtar, on the opposite side.*]

Zamti. Thou ever faithful creature !—

Man. Can'st thou, Zamti,
Still call me faithful ? By that honour'd name
Wilt thou call her, whose mild maternal love
Hath overwhelm'd us all ?

Zamti. Thou art my wife,
Whose matchless excellence, ev'n in bondage,
Hath cheer'd my soul ; but now thy ev'ry charm,
By virtue waken'd, kindled by distress
To higher lustre, all my passions beat
Unutterable gratitude and love.

And must—oh ! cruel!—must I see thee bleed ?

Man. For me death wears no terror on his brow.
Full twenty years hath this resounding breast
Been smote with these sad hands ; these haggard eyes
Have seen my country's fall ; my dearest husband—
My son—my king—all in the Tartar's hands :
What then remains for me ? Death—only death.

Zamti. Ah ! can thy tenderness endure the pangs
Inventive cruelty ev'n now designs ?—

Must this fair form—this soft perfection bleed?
Thy decent limbs be strain'd with cruel cords
To glut a ruffian's rage?——

Man. Alas! this frame,
This feeble texture never can sustain it.
But this—this I can bear—— [*Shews a dagger.*]

Zamti. Ha!

Man. Yes!——this dagger!
Do thou but lodge it in this faithful breast,
My heart shall spring to meet thee.

Zamti. Oh!——

Man. Do thou,
My honour'd lord, who taught me every virtue,
Afford this friendly, this last human office,
And teach me now to die.

Zamti. Oh! never——never——
Hence let me bear this fatal instrument.

[*Takes the dagger.*]

What, to usurp the dread prerogative
Of life and death, and measure out the thread
Of our own beings!—'tis the coward's act,
Who dares not to encounter pain and peril.
Be that the practice of th' untutor'd savage;
Be it the practice of the gloomy North.

Man. Must we then wait a haughty tyrant's nod,
The vassals of his will?—No—let us rather
Nobly break through the barriers of this life,
And join the beings of some other world,
Who'll throng around our greatly daring souls,
And view the deed with wonder and applause.

Zamti. Distress too exquisite!--Ye holy Pow'rs,
If aught below can supersede your law,
And plead for wretches, who dare, self-impell'd,
Rush to your awful presence;---oh!--it is not
When the distemper'd passions rage, when pride
Is stung to madness, when ambition falls
From his high scaffolding;---oh! no. If aught
Can justify the blow, it is when Virtue
Has nothing left to do; when Liberty
No more can breathe at large; 'tis with the groans
Of our dear country when we dare to die.

Man. Then here at once direct the friendly steel.

Zamti. One last adieu!--now!--ah! does this become
Thy husband's love?---thus with uplifted blade
Can I approach that bosom-bliss, where oft
With other looks than these---oh! my Mandane!--
I've hush'd my cares within thy shelt'ring arms?

Man. Alas! the loves that hover'd o'er our pillows
Have spread their pinions, never to return,
And the pale Fates surround us!---
Then lay me down in honourable rest:
Come, as thou art, all hero, to my arms,
And free a virtuous wife.

Zamti. It must be so.

Now then prepare thee---My arm flags and droops,
Conscious of thee in ev'ry trembling nerve.

[*Dashe down the dagger.*]

By heav'n, once more I would not raise the point
Against that hoard of sweets, for endless years
Of universal empire.

Man. Ha! the fell ministers of wrath---and yet
They shall not long insult us in our woes.
Myself will still preserve the means of death.

[*Takes up the dagger.*]

Enter TIMURKAN and OCTAR.

Timur. Now then, detested pair, your hour is come---
Drag forth these slaves to instant death and torment.
I hate this dull delay; I burn to see them
Gasping in death, and welt'ring in their gore.

Man. Zamti, support my steps---with thee to die
Is all the boon Mandane now would crave.

[*Exeunt Mandane and Zamti.*]

Timur. Those rash, presumptuous boys, are they
brought forth?

Octar. Mirvan will lead the victims to their fate.

Timur. And yet what boots their death?---the Orphan lives,

And in this breast fell horror and remorse
Must be the dire inhabitants.---Oh! Octar,
These midnight visions shake my inmost soul!

Octar. And shall the shad'wings of a feverish brain
Disturb a conqu'ror's breast?---

Timur. Octar, they've made
Such desolation here---'tis drear and horrible!---
On yonder couch, soon as sleep clos'd my eyes,
All that yon mad enthusiastic priest
In mystic rage denounc'd, rose to my view;
And ever and anon a livid flash,
From conscience shot, shew'd to my aching sight

The colours of my guilt——
Billows of blood were round me ; and the ghosts,
The ghosts of heroes, by my rage destroy'd,
Came with their ghastly orbs, and streaming wounds ;
They stalk'd around my bed ;—with loud acclaim
They call'd Zaphimri ! 'midst the lightning's blaze
Heav'n roll'd consenting thunders o'er my head ;
Straight from his covert the youth sprung upon me,
And shook his gleaming steel—he hurl'd me down,
Down, headlong down the drear——hold, hold ! where
am I ?——

Oh ! this dire whirl of thought---my brain's on fire !

Oclar. Compose this wild disorder of thy soul.
Your foes this moment die.

Enter MIRVAN.

Timur. What would'st thou, Mirvan ?

Mir. Near to the eastern gate, a slave reports,
As on his watch he stood, a gleam of arms
Cast a dim lustrè through the night ; and straight
The steps of men thick sounded in his ear :
In close array they march'd.

Timur. Some lurking treason !——
What, ho ! my arms---ourselves will sally forth.

Mir. My liege, their scanty and rash-levied crew
Want not a monarch's sword---the valiant Oclar,
Join'd by yon faithful guard, will soon chastise them.

Timur. Then be it so---Oclar, draw off the guard,
And bring their leaders bound in chains before me.

[*Exit Oclar.*

Mir. With sure conviction we have further learn'd
The long-contended truth—Eran's their king—
The traitor Zamti counted but one son;
And him he sent far hence to Corea's realm,
That should it e'er be known the prince surviv'd,
The boy might baffle justice.

Timur. Ha! this moment
Ourself will see him fall.

Mir. Better, my liege,
At this dead hour you sought repose—mean time
Justice on him shall hold her course. Your foes
Else might still urge that you delight in blood.
The semblance of humanity will throw
A veil upon ambition's deeds—'tis thus
That mighty conqu'rors thrive;—and ev'n Vice,
When it would prosper, borrows Virtue's mien.

Timur. Mirvan, thou counsel'st right: beneath a shew
Of public weal we lay the nations waste.
And yet these eyes shall never know repose,
Till they behold Zaphimri perish. Mirvan,
Attend me forth.

Mir. Forgive, my sov'reign liege,
Forgive my over-forward zeal—I knew
It was not fitting he should breathe a moment:
The truth once known, I rush'd upon the victim,
And with this sabre cleft him to the ground.

Timur. Thanks to great Lama!—treason is no more,
And their boy king is dead. Mirvan, do thou
This very night bring me the stripling's head.
Soon as the dawn shall purple yonder east,

Aloft in air all China shall behold it,
Parch'd by the sun, and welt'ring to the wind :
Haste, Mirvan, haste, and sate my fondest wish.

Mir. This hour approves my loyalty and truth. [*Ex.*

Timur. Their deep laid plot hath miss'd it's aim, and
Timurkan

May reign secure. No longer horrid dreams
Shall hover round my couch; the prostrate world
Henceforth shall learn to own my sov'reign sway.

Enter MIRVAN.

Timur. Well, Mirvan, hast thou brought the wish'd-
for pledge? [horror !

Mir. My liege, I fear 'twill strike thy soul with

Zaph. By heav'n, the sight will glad my longing
eyes,

Oh ! give it to me !——

*Enter ZAPHIMRI (a Sabre in his Hand) and plants him-
self before the Tyrant.*

Timur. Ha ! then all is lost,

Zaph. Now, bloody Tartar, now then know Zaphimri.

Timur. Accursed treason !---To behold thee thus
Alive before me, blasts my aching eye-balls :
My blood forgets to move ; each pow'r dies in me.

Zaph. Well may'st thou tremble, well may guilt
like thine

Shrink back appall'd ;---for now avenging Heav'n
In me sends forth it's minister of wrath,
To deal destruction on thee.——

Timur. Treach'rous slave!

Tis fal'se!---with coward-art, a base assassin,
A midnight ruffian on my peaceful hour
Secure thou com'st, thus to assault a warrior
Thy heart could never dare to meet in arms. [see'st

Zaph. Not meet thee, Tartar?---ha!--in me thou
One on whose head unnumber'd wrongs thou'st heap'd;
Else could I scorn thee, thus defenceless.---Yes,
By all my great revenge, could bid thee try each shape,
Assume each horrid form, come forth array'd
In all the terrors of destructive guilt;---
But now a dear, a murder'd father calls;
He lifts my arm to rivet thee to earth,
Th' avenger of mankind.

Mir. Fall on, my prince.

Timur. By Heav'n, I'll dare thee still. Resign it, slave,
Resign thy blade to nobler hands.

[Snatches *Mirvan's sabre.*

Mir. Oh! horror!

What ho! bring help!--Let not the fate of China
Hang on the issue of a doubtful combat.

Timur. Come on, presumptuous boy!

Zaph. Inhuman regicide!

Now, lawless ravager, *Zaphimri* comes
To wreak his vengeance on thee. [Exeunt fighting.

Mir. [solus.] Oh! nerve his arm, ye Pow'rs, and
guide each blow!

Enter HAMET.

Mir. See there!--behold--he darts upon his prey.--

Zaph. [*within.*] Die, bloodhound, die!

Timur. [*within.*] May curses blast my arm
That fail'd so soon!—

Hamet. The Tartar drops his point.

Zaphimri now——

Timur. [*within.*] —Have mercy!—mercy!—oh!—

Zaph. [*within.*] Mercy was never thine.—This, fell
destroyer,

This, for a nation's groans!—

Mir. The monster dies;

He quivers on the ground. Then let me fly

To Zamti and Mandane with the tidings,

And call them back to liberty and joy. [*Exit Mirvan.*]

Enter ZAPHIMRI.

Zaph. Now, Hamet, now oppression is no more:
This smoking blade hath drunk the tyrant's blood.

Hamet. China again is free! There lies the corpse
That breath'd destruction to the world.

Zaph. Yes, there,
Tyrannic guilt, behold thy fatal end,
The wages of thy sins.

Enter MORAT.

Morat. Where is the king?

Revenge now stalks abroad. Our valiant leaders,
True to the destin'd hour, at once broke forth
From ev'ry quarter on th' astonish'd foe:
Ostar is fall'n; all cover'd o'er with wounds
He met his fate; and still the slaught'ring sword

Invades the city, sunk in sleep and wine.

Zaph. Lo! Timurkan lies levell'd with the dust!
Send forth, and let Orasming straight proclaim
Zaphimri king—my subjects rights restor'd.

[*Exit Morat.*

Now, where is Zamti? where Mandane?—ha!
What means that look of wan despair?

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Oh! dire mischance!

While here I trembled for the great event,
The unrelenting slaves, whose trade is death,
Began their work. Nor piety, nor age,
Could touch their felon-hearts; they seiz'd on Zamti,
And bound him on the wheel. All frantic at the sight,
Mandane plung'd a poniard in her heart,
And at her husband's feet expir'd.

Hamet. Oh! Heavens!

My mother!——

Zaph. Fatal rashness!——*Mirvan*, say,
Is Zamti too destroy'd?

Mir. Smiling in pangs,
We found the good, the venerable man:
Releas'd from anguish, with what strength remain'd,
He reach'd the couch where lost Mandane lay; [body,
There threw his mangled limbs; there, clinging to the
Prints thousand kisses on her clay-cold lips,
And pours his sad lamentings, in a strain
Might call each pitying angel from the sky,
To sympathize with human woe,

[The great Folding-doors open in the back Scene.

Zaph. And see,

See on that mournful bier he clasps her still;
Still hangs upon each faded feature; still
To her deaf ear complains in bitter anguish.
Heart-piercing sight!

Hamet. Oh! agonizing scene!

[The corpse is brought forward, Zamti lying on the couch, and clasping the dead body.]

Zamti. Ah! stay, Mandane, stay!—yet once again
Let me behold the day-light of thy eyes!—
Gone, gone—for ever, ever gone! Those orbs

That ever gently beam'd, must dawn no more! [joys?

Zaph. Are these our triumphs?—these our promis'd

Zamti. The music of that voice recalls my soul.

[Rises from the body, and runs eagerly to embrace Zaphimri; his strength fails him, and he falls at his feet.]

My prince! my king!

Zaph. Soft, raise him from the ground.

Zamti. Zaphimri!—Hamet too!—Oh! bless'd event!
I could not hope such tidings—Thee, my prince—
Thee too, my son—I thought ye both destroy'd.
My slow remains of life cannot endure

These strong vicissitudes of grief and joy. [dane!
And there—oh! Heaven!—see there, there lies Man-

Hamet. How fares it now, my father?

Zamti. Lead me to her——

Is that the ever dear, the faithful woman?

Is that my wife?—And is it thus at length,
Thus do I see thee then, Mandane?—Cold,
Alas! death-cold——

Cold is that breast, where virtue from above
Made its delighted sojourn, and those lips
That utter'd heav'nly truth—pale! pale!—dead, dead!
[Sinks on the body.

Pray ye entomb me with her! [quests back;

Zaph. Then take, ye Pow'rs, then take your con-
Zaphimri never can survive——

Zamti. [Raising himself.] I charge thee live:
A base desertion of the public weal
Can ne'er become a king.—Alas! my son——
(By that dear tender name if once again
Zarm ti may call thee)—tears will have theiway!
Forgive this flood of tenderness: my heart
Melts even now! Thou noble youth, this is
The only interview we e'er shall have.

Zaph. And will ye then, inexorable Pow'rs,
Will ye then tear him from my aching heart?

Zamti. The moral duties of the private man
Are grafted in thy soul—oh! still remember
The mean immutable of happiness,
Or in the vale of life, or on a throne,
Is Virtue. Each bad action of a king
Extends beyond his life, and acts again
It's tyranny o'er ages yet unborn.
To error mild, severe to guilt, protect
The helpless innocent; and learn to feel
The best delight of serving human kind.

Be these, my prince, thy arts ; be these thy cares,
And live the father of a willing people. [lips

Hamet. Oh ! cruel !—see—ah ! see !—he dies !—his
Tremble in agony—his eye balls glare !—
A death-like paleness spreads o'er all his face !

Zaph. Is there no help to save so dear a life ?

Zamti. It is too late—I die—alas ! I die !—
Life harrass'd out, pursu'd with barb'rous art,
Through ev'ry trembling joint—now fails at once !
Zaphimri—oh ! farewell !—I shall not see
The glories of thy reign.—*Hamet* !—my son—
Thou good young man, farewell !—*Mandane*, yes,
My soul with pleasure takes her flight, that thus
Faithful in death, I leave these cold remains
Near thy dear honour'd clay. [Dies.

Zaph. And art thou gone,
Thou best of men ?—Then must *Zaphimri* pine
In ever-during grief, since thou art lost ;
Since that firm patriot, whose parental care
Should raise, should guide, should animate my virtues,
Lies there a breathless corse.

Hamet. My liege, forbear :
Live for your people ; madness and despair
Belong to woes like mine.

Zaph. Thy woes, indeed,
Are deep, thou pious youth—yes, I will live,
To soften thy afflictions ; to assuage
A nation's grief, when such a pair expires.
Come to my heart :—in thee another *Zamti*
Shall bless the realm. Now let me hence to hail

My people with the sound of peace ; that done,
To these a grateful monument shall raise,
With all sepulchral honour. Frequent there
We'll offer incense ;—there each weeping muse
Shall grave the tributary verse ;—with tears
Embalm their memories ; and teach mankind,
Howe'er Oppression stalk the groaning earth,
Yet Heav'n, in it's own hour, can bring relief ;
Can blast the tyrant in his guilty pride,
And prove the Orphan's guardian to the last.



EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. YATES.

THROUGH five long acts I've worn my sighing face,
 Confin'd by critic laws to time and place ;
 Yet that once done, I ramble as I please,
 Cry London Hoy ! and whisk o'er land and seas—— }
 Ladies, excuse my dress---'tis true Chinese.
 Thus, quit of husband, death, and tragic strain,
 Let us enjoy our dear small talk again.

How could this bard successful hope to prove ?
 So many heroes---and not one in love !
 No suitor here to talk of flames that thrill ;
 To say the civil thing——“ Your eyes so kill ! ”—— }
 No ravisher, to force us——to our will !
 You've seen their eastern virtues, patriot passions,
 And now for something of their taste and fashions.
 “ O Lord ! that's charming, ”——cries my Lady Fidget, }
 “ I long to know it—Do the creatures visit ?
 “ Dear Mrs. Yates, do, tell us—Well, how is it ? ” }

First, as to beauty——Set your hearts at rest——
 They're all broad foreheads, and pigs eyes at best.
 And then they lead such strange, such formal lives !——
 —A little more at home than English wives :
 Lest the poor things should roam and prove untrue,
 They all are crippled in the tiny shoe.
 A hopeful scheme to keep a wife from madding !
 —We pinch our feet, and yet are ever gadding.

Then they've no cards, no routs, ne'er take their fling,
 And pin-money is an unheard-of thing!
 Then how d'ye think they write---You'll ne'er divine---
 From top to bottom down in one straight line. [Mimics.
 We ladies, when our flames we cannot smother,
 Write letters---from one corner to another. [Mimics.

One mode there is in which both climes agree;
 I scarce can tell---'mongst friends then let it be---
 ---The creatures love to cheat as well as we.

But blese my wits! I've quite forgot the bard---
 A civil soul!---By me he sends this card---
 "Presents respects---to ev'ry lady here---
 "Hopes for the honour---of a single tear."
 The critics then will throw their dirt in vain,
 One drop from you will wash out ev'ry stain.
 Acquaints you---(now the man is past his fright)
 He holds his rout---and here he keeps his night.
 Assures you all a welcome, kind and hearty,
 The ladies shall play crowns--and there's the shilling party.

[Points to the upper gallery.



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